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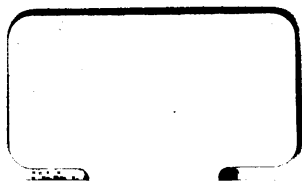
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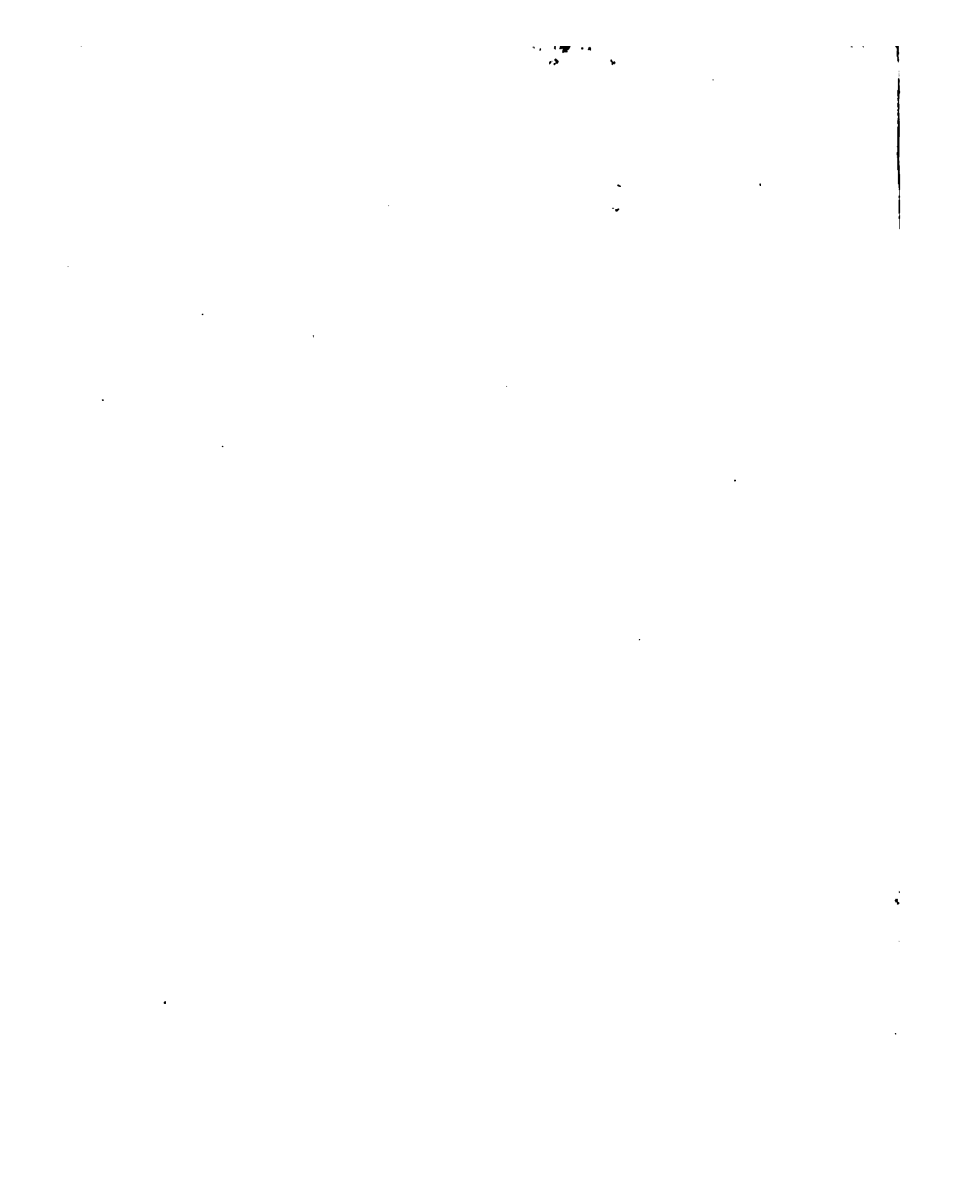


To Mrs. Horace Silsby
with kind regards of the Author -
Benj. F. Leggett

Ward. Del. Co. Pa.

Jan. 18th 1896

Leggett
NB



AN IDYL OF LAKE GEORGE

AND

OTHER POEMS

BY

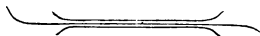
BENJ. F. ^{Franklin}LEGGETT,

AUTHOR OF

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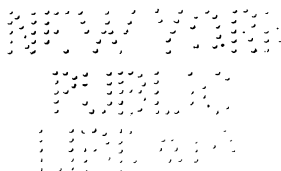


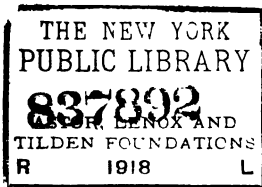
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MJC





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TO MY FRIEND
WALLACE BRUCE
THESE POEMS ARE AFFECTIONATELY
DEDICATED.

Sullivan, Aug. 2/18.

50¢

*"A quiet nook of runes and rhymes
With moted sunbeams streaming:—
Old legends born of other times,
Faint echoes of the far off chimes,
And Fancy's idle dreaming."*

CONTENTS.

AN IDYL OF LAKE GEORGE,	PAGE. II
---------------------------------	-------------

ADIRONDACK POEMS :

The Indian Plume,	29
Where Boyhood Dreamed,	34
At the Mill,	37
Indian Summer,	39
A Day Dream,	41
Wood-Paths,	47
Margery,	50
Under the Pines,	52
Mill Brook,	54
Where the Morning-Glories Twine, . .	57
After Harvest,	58
An Invitation,	61
Before the Fire,	65
In Autumn Time,	66
Without and Within,	68
In the Adirondacks,	69

SONNETS :

	PAGE.
At Amesbury,	75
Bubbles,	76
In Ravenna,	77
To My Mother,	78
At Alloway,	79
To M. D. P.,	80
To Mr. and Mrs. Ralph H. Shaw,	81
Enid,	82
In September,	83

OCCASIONAL POEMS :

To Thomas C. Latta,	87
Alma Mater,	92
To Mrs. E. D. E. N. Southworth,	96
In Memoriam.—T. C. L.,	98
The Mother's Call,	101
To an Infant Boy,	105
To Rev. A. J. Lockhart,	107
My Birthday,	109
To a Child,	111
To George Gary Bush,	113
Memorial Poem,	115
In the Dandelion-Time,	120
Easter Dawn,	123
Wayside Rhymes,	124

CONTENTS.

vii.

OCCASIONAL POEMS :— *Continued.*

	PAGE.
A Christmas Poem,	127
A Greeting,	131
The Time of Goldenrod,	132
October,	134
Camp Ossipee,	135

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS :

Susqueco,	139
My Garden,	142
December,	146
In Bethany,	151
Auld Kirk Alloway,	153
Homeward Bound,	155
Eventide,	157
Endymion,	158
Whittier,	159
Fishing,	160
Midnight and Dawn,	163
In the Morning,	164
A Little While,	166
At Gad's Hill,	168
The Passing of Summer,	170
A Morning Prayer,	171
As a Little Child,	172

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS:— *Continued.*

	PAGE.
A Fallen Star,	175
In Slumber-Land,	176
Through Fields of Corn,	178
Saint George and the Dragon,	180
Little Saint Elizabeth,	184
In Cana of Galilee,	187
THE CITY OF DOOM,	193

AN IDYL OF LAKE GEORGE.

*Thou Sleeping Beauty, watched by purple hills,
While sun-browned Summer trails with airy grace
Her soft cloud-shadows o'er thy dimpled face,
And deep-drawn peace thy dreamless slumber fills !
How fair thou art ! And how thy being thrills
When star-sown glory from the fields of space
Thy throbbing bosom holds in soft embrace
Till morn her limpid, diamond dew distills.
The breath of war across thy face has blown,
The wigwam's smoke has curled about thy dream,
And savage deeds have sown thy shores with tears :
Thy Summer airs have caught the warrior's moan,
The hiss of arrow and the red man's scream.—
But these are echoes of the long lost years.*

AN IDYL OF LAKE GEORGE.

I.

O Beauty of the forest wild,
Thou mountain-girded inland sea !
A charm is wrought where thou hast smiled,
And fondly turns my heart to thee.

When boyhood trod thy haunted shore
Thy grace did all his being thrill ;
And though the years return no more,
The first sweet vision lingers still.

Where through the woodland shadows deep
He followed down the mountain rills,
He found thee tranced in quiet sleep
Within the cradle of the hills.

There lay the Islands of the Blest
In dusky haze or sunny gleam,
As softly on the mother breast
They seemed to hold some happy dream.

From green of earth to blue of sky,
A spell of matchless beauty rare ;
And o'er yon mountain soaring high
A lone gray eagle climbed the air.

The years have gone, remembered well,
Yet sweet and cool the mornings break,
And sunsets weave their magic spell
Above the woodland belted lake.

II.

Lake George ! afar has flown thy name,
In sunny lands beyond the sea,
The fairest Beauty known to fame
In all the land of Liberty.

On mountain crest and shore and hill,
On magic isle and shadowed bay,

A wondrous presence lingers still,
Such glory crowns thy rest to-day.

Thou mirror of the mountains grand !
Yet fairer doth thy face appear
Than bonnie lochs of Scotia's land,
Or storied England's Windermere.

Thou hast the grace of Loch Katrine,
With mountain shadows brooding o'er
The sounding cliffs that o'er her lean —
The beauty of her winding shore.

Thine is the smile that Como wears ;
Each island-studded curve and turn
Has sweeter charm than Constance bears,
Or Leman's wave, or dark Lucerne.

As soft o'er thee the shadows fall,
As sweet the airs of Summer play,
Thou hast a part of each and all :
And thou art fairer still than they.

III.

Above the valleys winding down
By wood and slope and stream and scaur,
Mount Prospect lifts his granite crown
And looks upon the world afar.

By winding wood-paths cool and sweet,
We climb the slope in wayward lines,
Above the highway's dust and heat,
Beneath his storm-rocked mountain pines.

A dreamful peace the valley fills,
And calmly lies the lake at rest,
With shadows of the purple hills
In beauty folded on its breast.

Then airy phantoms float and swim
Across the changeful Summer day,
And dusky faces, fierce and grim,
With stealthy step the woodlands stray.

Again the sound of quick alarms !
The smoke of battle fills the glen,

The bugle blast, the clash of arms,
The savage deeds of savage men !

Through forest glades by sunshine kissed,
By lake and shore the horror spreads ;
The wood-flowers drip with more than mist —
The crimson dew that battle sheds !

The feathered arrows hiss and sing,
The red plumes dance, the scalp-knives gleam,
And savage war-cries leap and ring. —
The vision passes as a dream !

In silence sinks the mellow trill
That held the hours so sweet and long,
The shadows sleep, the winds are still,
The wood-thrush only breathes his song.

IV.

And here the tides of battle rolled
Around these crumbling ruins gray,
In that far time whose echoes old
Break not the Summer peace to-day.

Above these rough-hewn bastions strong
Their valor kept in days of yore,
What viewless spirits flit and throng
And watch the lake from shore to shore !

The wild-flowers hang above their sleep,
Though all unmarked each hidden mound,—
A silent watch the sentries keep
Above the forest battle ground.

And oft above the mountain lake
In ways perchance but half expressed,
Some hidden chord will Nature wake
Not all unmeet to soothe their rest ;

When o'er the pines the west winds tread,
And on the breath of Summer warm
The heaving mounds of darkness spread —
The angry thunder-folds of storm :

A breathless silence, deep and strange !
Then lightning leaps from rifted folds ;
In sudden crash from range to range
The long reverberation rolls.

Afar the distant thunders call :
The tumult and the darkness cease,
And from Fort George's ruined wall
The robin pipes his song of peace.

v.

Upon the air a breath of balm,
Above the red tarn's murky tides,
And anchored there in quiet calm
A fleet of water-lilies rides.

No harsher sound the silence thrills
Than Summer's mellow, mingled strain,
While quiet holds the tented hills
Where war's wild echoes rang amain.

The wild-fowl folds her weary wings,
The bittern wades the shallows cool,
And all unscared the wood-bird sings
Around the battle-crimsoned pool.

The clouds of war's dark thunder gust
Have rolled away from hill and glen,

And wild-flowers spring above the dust
Of valor's long-forgotten men :

Still wave the blooms on winds that blow,
And tasselled pine and airy frond,
And grasses lean and whisper low
Around the marge of Bloody Pond.

The twilight gathers weird and strange
And softly folds the haunted ground,
Till o'er the lone French Mountain range
The red moon rises, large and round.

VI.

How wide the walled horizons sweep,
From morning's blush to sunset's glow,
When from Black Mountain's rugged steep
We look across the world below.

Afar the misty mountains piled :
The Adirondack soaring free,
The dark Green ranges lone and wild,
The Catskills looking toward the sea.

Far off the dreaming waters lie,
White cascades leap in snowy foam ;
Lake Champlain mirrors cloud and sky,
The Hudson seeks his ocean home.

Yet from this vision fair and sweet,
From gleaming river winding on,
We turn a fairer scene to greet —
Saint Sacrament — Lake Horicon !

Blue walled the crystal Beauty lies :
In winding curves mid magic isles
She keeps the azure of the skies,
And threads her placid dream and smiles.

There distant stands the mountain band,
Here crowds to watch each sunny gleam :
And lo ! the gates of Fairyland !
Where thrice a hundred islands dream.

The mountains to the waters lean,
The shadows waver to and fro,
The magic islands hang between
The sky above — the sky below.

Such airy grace hath all the land —
Such limpid deeps the crystal tide;
As though some touch of fairy wand
Had thrown Aladdin's windows wide.

VII.

Lo ! yonder where the swollen burns
Leap down the ledges white as snow,
The Old Man of the Mountain turns
His stony gaze on all below.

As silent as the sphinxes stand
Where blinding desert dust is hurled,
He looks across the rolling land,—
Lone watcher of his mountain world.

Old Time has run a devious maze
Through hoary ages dim and old,
While he has kept with patient gaze
His vigil of the years untold.

He saw the blue lake sleep and dream
And blush and glow in morning's flame,

And laugh in Autumn's ruddy gleam
Long ages ere the pale-face came.

He looked across the virgin world,
By greed and hate unvalled around,
And saw the smoke of wigwams curled
Above the red man's hunting ground.

He saw the clouds of battle gloom,—
A bannered army sailing by ;
He heard the cannon's thunder boom,
And all the echoes make reply.

On weary wings the years have flown :
To him they are but sunny gleams, —
As through the long, gray ages lone,
He watches still — and watching, dreams.

VIII.

Fair morning wakes the world anew,
The shadows fold their tents and go,
A blush is on the waters blue,
The mountains wear a rosy glow.

The bladed paddles dip and rise,
The widening rings of crystal play : —
Across the deep, inverted skies
My bark canoe speeds on its way.

The smouldering camp-fire's breath upcurled
Recedes and fades upon the air ;
The grace of morning lights the world
And beauty lingers everywhere.

Where dark Tongue Mountain's wrinkled ledge
Slides deep below the crystal tide,
We skim above its granite wedge
And greet the fair lake's morning side.

Beneath the fringes of the pine,
Across the shadows glooming o'er
A winding way through shade and shine,
The bark glides on from shore to shore.

Rare scenes the changeful lights disclose —
Each dipping blade some sweet surprise ;
In dim, sheet bays the vision grows,
And where the thronging islands rise.

By wooded cape and mountain wall,
Through studded bay and reach of blue,
By crags whose mocking echoes call,
We thread the fairy mazes through.

A glow of sunset far and wide !
The rich light fades along the shore
Where sandy beaches meet the tide
Beneath the pines of Sagamore.

The cool night falls, the soft wind sleeps,
The low waves lap the pebbled coast,
While o'er the lake the wan mist creeps —
A still, gray wraith — a troubled ghost.

IX.

The pines' afar their shadows fling
And breathe a fragrance through the wood,
In measured song the tassels sing
Where once the ancient fortress stood.

At first a whisper soft and low,
Then swells to music full and strong,

As in the Summers long ago
Before their hundred years of song.

We muse within the tented shade,
And dream amid the morning's gold,
Till dusky glen and sunny glade
Are thronged with painted braves of old.

And here a sturdy fortress stands
Besieged by savage foes around,
And scalp-locks wave in crimson hands,
And all the wild is bloody ground.

At morn the banners crown her walls :
The evening bends above the stain ;
Her strength in smouldering ruin falls,—
These grassy mounds alone remain.

The pines still sing the old refrain,
The needles drop their crystal tears :
The song runs on — an endless strain —
Dirge-like and sweet a hundred years !

X.

Afar the Lake's soft azure lies,
In crystal beauty all its own,—
The magic mirror of the skies
Through all the misty ages flown.

And still the mountains guard her rest,
And all the years of strife but seem,
Above her calm, untroubled breast,
The memory of a vanished dream.



ADIRONDACK POEMS.



THE INDIAN PLUME.

I.

Where Tahawus' granite crown
On the wilderness looks down,
Standing in the light of dawn
With its glory 'round him drawn,
Giving back the sunset's gold
Over valleys gray and old,
While the dusky shadows dream
Over sleeping lake and stream :
There beneath the azure dome
Once the red man made his home, —
Over mountain and through glen
Roamed the Sachem's warrior men.

II.

On-wee, chieftain brave and bold,
Ruled his people there of old ;
There the smoke of wigwams curled
Over all the forest world ;

There the silent Prophet prayed,—
Warrior wooed his dusky maid :
Swiftly o'er the lakes of blue
Swept the Indian's birch canoe ;
From the Spirit's hollow hand
Peace and plenty filled the land,
While the mountains, purple crowned,
Pitched their silent tents around.

III.

There *Ka-no-ah*, brave and grand,
Wooed the Beauty of the land,—
Len-a-wee, the maiden fair
With her starry night of hair :
Wooed her but to yield his breath
To the mighty Angel Death !
For, alas ! his angry frown
On the red man darkened down ;
Wild and wigwam felt his sway —
Pale the dying warriors lay ;
For whoever crossed his path
Felt the stormy Angel's wrath.

IV.

O the dying, and the dead !
Hah-wen-no-yo's smile had fled !
Vainly chiefs in council met,
Smoked the sacred calumet ;
Prayed the Prophet all in vain —
Vainly was the White Dog slain :
Naught could bid the Fiend depart
Save the warm blood from the heart
Of the maiden from whose sight
Passed her lover cold and white : —
So with flashing blade in hand
She sought him in the Spirit Land.

V.

Thus the sacrifice was made —
Thus the plague of Death was stayed :
Out of maiden love so true
Came the Spirit's smile anew,—
Peace and favor from the skies
Born of loving sacrifice !
Lifeless lay her slender form
Safe from sorrow's pelting storm : —

Moaning for her lover slain
Quick she clasped his hand again,
With him roamed the blissful bounds
Of the Happy Hunting Grounds.

VI.

When the morning's golden flame
Through the silent forest came,
Touched the pools of crimson rain
Where the slender maid had lain,
Lo ! what beauty there up-grew !
Petaled stem from scarlet dew,
Blood-red, waved its bloom in air,
As the maiden sweet and fair,
While its fragrance softly shed
Kept the memory of the dead ;
All the forest gave it room —
Sunset's blush — the Indian Plume !

VII.

Years have vanished — deed and fame,
Tribe and people but a name ;

Shadowed shore and bank of stream
Keep the maiden's love and dream :
How in sorrow's storm and drift
Followed she the arrow swift ;
How her heart's warm life-blood red
For her people's weal was shed : —
This shall future ages know
While the blooms of Summer blow,
While in leafy glade and gloom
Swings the graceful Indian Plume.

WHERE BOYHOOD DREAMED.

A vision of vales and mountains
Before me stands to-day,
And the sunshine lends it glory,
While shadows swing and play,
And the green hills watch forever
By the old home far away.

The sunshine sleeps in the valley,
The airs of Summer blow ;
The daisies toss in the meadows
All in the golden glow,
And dreaming still on the waters
Are lilies of long ago.

The dear old home by the wayside,
With broad roof sloping down,
The hush of the cool sweet shadows
Tossed from the maple's crown,

The mossy eaves, the door a-swing,
And the lichened walls of brown !

The cradle-song of the robin
Rocked in the maple leaves,
The old barn, memory haunted,
Filled with the golden sheaves,
The twitter of happy swallows
From the mud-nests 'neath the eaves !

The shy thrush sings in the orchard,
The call of quail is near,
And down from the hillside pasture
The sheep-bells ringing clear
And the sound of flail and reaper
Come back with the waning year.

O but for a day-dream olden
Within the maple's shade,
A breath from the clover meadows
Where restless boyhood played,
Ere over the wide horizon
The feet of the rover strayed !

O valley amid the mountains !
My fond heart turns to you
For rest in the quiet shadows
When cares of life are through :
Under the clover and daisies —
Under the daisies and dew !

AT THE MILL.

The old mill stands by the shadowed stream,
Whose laughing waters steal
Through quiet nooks of sweet release
From thralldom of its wheel :
And round and round it wallows in foam,
The great wheel of the mill,
And the drone and whirl of belt and burr
By day are never still,
And out of the past they sound for aye
From Summers o'er the hill.

The fish-hawk dives in the glassy pool
Beyond the dam's low breast,
The squirrel chatters within the wood,
The robin builds her nest :
Where the clearing spreads its briar fringe
The bushes are ablowl,

And the gleeful noise of merry boys
That stirs the glen below,
Is only an echo that lingers there
From lips of long ago.

The dusty windows are open wide,
The sunbeam's golden wing
Lights up the room with a ruddy glow
Where trailing cobwebs cling ;
The miller hums low a wordless song,
Some half forgotten strain,
While the wheels go round with rumbling sound
To grind the golden grain : —
And the song and whir of belt and burr
Rebuild the past again.

INDIAN SUMMER.

Whence this dreamful, misty haze,
Melting through the amber days,
While the brown earth seems to smile
Through her happy rest awhile ?
Leaves transfigured all around,
Scatter sunshine on the ground ;
Russet, gold and crimson fine
Make a picture half divine ;
Ragged boneset, dusty, dun,
Dreams along the meadow run ;
Foaming asters hold their place
All unshamed by summer's grace ;
Poke-weed lifts its fruitage fine,
Bursting with its purple wine ;
Sumac waves its spindles red,
Thistle-down sails overhead ;

Chestnut burrs are downward tossed,
Rifled by the robber frost ;
All the land in waiting lies
'Neath the peace of Autumn skies : —
Whence this dreamful, misty haze,
Melting through the amber days ?
Whence the golden glory clear
Blended with the atmosphere ?
Autumn's dream of summer's prime —
This is Indian Summer time.

A DAY DREAM.

A picture hangs upon my walls,
Whose light my study fills ;
A landscape, where the sunshine falls
Amid the Northern hills.

There Art has caught with cunning hand,
The mingled shade and gleam,
The hill-slope and the mountain land
Of boyhood's early dream.

There lie broad acres laced with rills
And gemmed with lake and pond,
Behind a wave of wooded hills
And mountain peaks beyond.

So cool the dreamful shadows lie,
The warm lights burn and glow,
They call me 'neath the azure sky
Through paths of long ago.

And while I gaze the room grows wide,
The narrow walls expand,
And in the dewy morning-tide
Lies childhood's wondrous land !

How fair the quiet valley sleeps,
Walled in by hills of green,
O'er-arched by cloudless azure deeps
And clad in Summer's sheen.

The crooning of the sombre pine,
The poplar leaves at play,
The crickets' song at day's decline,
Are in the air to-day.

The wild duck's note, the bittern's cry,
In startled tones of fear,
The lonely whip-poor-will's reply,
Are ringing in mine ear.

Across the valley-pastures green,
In long and spectral lines,
Is laid the shadow's woven screen
From needles of the pines.

Above the wood-path climb the hills
Whose slopes are green with moss, —
Below the alders fringe the rills
Where foam and laughter toss.

In ample chorus, clear and strong,
Sweet nature's voices come,
And in the pauses of the song
The partridge beats his drum.

Within the forest glades of gloom
Her song the wood-thrush sings,
And o'er the meadow's waving bloom
The whirl of restless wings.

The winding road again I trace,
From uplands leading down,
From lichen-spotted rocks that grace
The hillside pasture brown.

O, tented hills of green, ye bring
The Summer back to me —
The icy coolness of the spring
Beneath the birchen tree !

Far off the warder mountains keep
Their camp against the sky,
While in their purple vales asleep
The folded shadows lie.

Afar the bannered mists are blown
Across the hills of song,
Where Marcy lifts his snowy cone
Above the purple throng.

Low in the valley ringed with moss,
The marsh with vines o'er-run,
Around the firs whose shadows cross
The lances of the sun.

The thronging lilies by its rim
A white flotilla lies,
And swallows o'er its crystal skim,
And steel-blue dragon-flies.

Above the lowland balsam spires
And sweet-fern slopes of gray,
The clearing, where the forest fires
Have swept its pride away.

Still Nature heals the smitten land
With blackberry vines o'er-run,
And children throng where charred trunks stand
For largess of the sun.

And here, with moose-wood from the glade,
And pine-bark peeled and rolled,
Our rustic berry pails were made
For fruitage manifold.

Where yonder headland lifts a line
Of firs along its crest,
The breeze-song of the mountain pine
Is o'er the valley's rest.

Below the shivering birches stand
Amid the sun-flecked gloom,
A sheeted throng — a spectre band —
White ghosts that wait their doom.

The mountain brook comes leaping down
From upland hidden springs,
And fringing alders lift their crown
Above the song it sings.

And on, and on, through meadow lands,
Toward the sunset's glow,
By willow banks and shining sands,
Its laughing waters go.

A dreamful glory gilds the scene,
Slow falls the weary sun,
And while the shadows eastward lean
My Summer dream is done.

WOOD-PATHS.

Underneath the forest trees
 Waving to and fro,
Wandering down the wood-paths
 Where we used to go,—
Nature's happiest voices
 Trilling all in tune,
Pouring breathless harmony
 Through the dream of June :

Treble of the thrush's song,
 Lisping of the vines,
Chanting of the poplar leaves,
 Singing of the pines ;
Flutter of the tasselled birch —
 Ghost among the trees —
Chatter of the squirrel throng,
 Murmur of the bees.

Bladed rush and adder's tongue
 Growing by the run,
Prince's pine and moose-wood
 Dreaming of the sun ;
Trillium and golden-thread
 Tangled through and through,
Airy grace of fronded ferns
 Jewelled with the dew.

Every breath of melody
 Summer morning brings,
Cawing of the idle crows,
 Whir of partridge wings ;
Music in the swinging bough,
 Gladness in the air,
Mellow call of mated birds —
 Not a note to spare !

Leafy-lighted everglades,
 Witching sylvan scenes,
Carpeted with fairy moss
 Spread with wintergreens ;

Tangled bud and blossom bind
With their green and gold,
Ravelled fringes of the wood
As in days of old.

Wandering down the wood-paths,
Leaf and trill of bird
Olden echoes wake again —
Other songs are heard ;
Roaming through the shady wood
Waving to and fro,
Pass the thronging Summers dead —
Junes of long ago !

MARGERY.

Over yonder in the cottage on the hillside,
Over-looking all the waving fields of corn,
In the merry song-time of the blithesome Summer,
There the rosy little Margery was born.

Summer after Summer, in her grace and beauty,
Through the pastures and the meadows roamed her feet,
And the sunny hill-slopes and the quiet river
Knew the rapture of her presence fair and sweet.

Ever blithely tripping through the paths of childhood,
Over roses fresh and sweet with early dew,
Merry, merry music ringing through the wildwood
Sweetly led and charmed her all the journey through.

Even now I see her, dappled with the shadows,
Hearing yet the song-birds of the leafy wood,
All her matchless graces rounding into beauty
In the dewy morning of her maidenhood.

Softly in the silence of the growing shadows,
When their dusky mantle wrapped the evening throng,
How she held and charmed us with her pleasant story,
And the tender music of her sweetest song !

Swiftly sped the Summers, full of song and gladness,
While their silent sandals never wakened care,
Though the stormy winters sang a wilder music,
Through the swirl of snow-flakes drifting down the air.

Fairest, richest treasure all the seasons brought her —
Ears to hear and heed the melodies that blow,
Eyes to read the secret and the mystic meaning
Of the hidden wisdom we have yet to know.

Softly bent the daisies to the swaying clover,
While the blooms and grasses bore the jewelled dew,
And the morning crowned her with its rosy splendor,
When the gleam of angel wings vanished in the blue.

Yonder sleeps the valley in the hazy distance,
And the ripples through the wheat are running free ;
But the grace and beauty of the years have vanished —
And the river runs in sadness to the sea !

UNDER THE PINES.

Amid the shadows cool and sweet
My trees give refuge from the heat.
Within their tent-like shade I lie,
Close shut from glare of noonday sky,
And sleep and dream and wake again
With peace and rest in heart and brain,
While all the fingers of the breeze
Awake their hidden harmonies.

And cool beneath the fretted sky
The idle days go drifting by :
The pine-tree's mingled sob and song
Is with me all the Summer long ;
And to its measured sweetness low
Rare pictures seem to come and go,
And drooping palms across the sea
Breathe softly endless songs for me.

In idle mood, in drowsy play,
The waning Summer glides away :
By glacier rim, or fringe of snow,
Where shy, sweet thoughts of Summer grow,
I hear below the frozen line
The storm-song of the mountain-pine,
Or glimpse through rifts of cloudy swirl
The ghostly mountain peaks of pearl.

In cool procession to and fro
The airy shadows swing and go ;
And through the pine's soft murmur runs
The myrtle's song of Southern suns,
While lifted far in wavy line
Stand swarthy slopes of Apennine,
Or wastes of gray, palm-bordered sand,
Or fir-framed aisles of Oden-land.

Deep peace within the shadow throng
Distils from croon of drowsy song :
I take the blessed boon it brings
And drift away on idle wings,
Where care is not, and vision clear
In fancy's mellow atmosphere,
And dream, amid the shadows' play,
The happy dreams of yesterday.

MILL BROOK.

All along the winding stream
Down from Mead's mill —
Back through boyhood's wayward dream
Fancy roams at will.

Up and down the stream to-day,
Through the shady glen,
Bare feet plashing all the way,—
Just a boy again.

Onward runs the liquid song,
On through shadows cool,
Only pausing where they throng
Darkly o'er some pool.

Squirrels call the tree tops through,
Idle crows reply ;
In the airy upper blue
Sails a gray hawk by.

Downward through the songful dell
Slides the stream away,
While beyond the sound of bell
Roving truants play :

Angling in the deeper stream
Where old tree-trunks cross,
And the brook trout dart and gleam
Underneath the moss.

Wet and wading all in line,
Building castles grand,
For the waves to undermine
In the fringing sand.

Down between the sloping hill,—
Dusky with its pines,
And the meadow's wooded frill
Slides the stream and winds.

On the limpid water runs —
Idle, wayward stream ;
Through the cycle of the suns
To the ocean's dream.

Green of Summer turns to brown,
Dreams of boyhood flee,—
While we drift on down and down,
Toward the silent sea.

WHERE THE MORNING-GLORIES TWINE.

Though airy grace of Summer all the quiet landscape fills
My idle fancy wanders far beyond the breezy hills :
I hear the song of trilling birds among the trees at morn,
The whisper of the Summer wind across the bladed corn ;
Where shadows lie and listen to the larches' solemn croon,
I hear the merry music of the mellow horn at noon,
And the echoes leap and linger, then drift and drift away,
Down the valley of my childhood where sunshine falls
to-day.

The honey-bees are droning in the pollen-dusted bells,
In quest of treasured sweetness for their hidden waxen
cells ;
The roses and the violets in beauty are ablow
Within the little garden where the scarlet poppies grow ;
The sunflower and the marigold are lighting up the gloom,
The hollyhock is idling there — a very tramp of bloom ;
While tulips lift their beakers up and pledge in ruddy wine
The dear old home forever where the morning-glories twine.

AFTER HARVEST.

The land is fair in the August light, and the shadows
lie in swoon,
The corn stands up in its bladed might in the golden
afternoon.
While the dreamy haze of Summer's smile the peaceful
valley fills,
I fold my hands and rest awhile on the slope of the
leaning hills.

The stubble fields of rusty brown are asleep in the
waning sun,
For the ripened grain is gathered in, and the harvest
work is done :
So here I rest in the day's decline amid its golden
gleam,
While the boys are gone for a holiday, a-trouting down
the stream.

The royal Summer is waning low and the harvest work
is done :

The bountiful Father be praised again for fruitful
treasures won.

Forgetful of trust in Thee, O God, our hearts have
shuddered in pain,

While a vision of loss has held our gaze amid the floods
of rain.

For the harvest's hope was well nigh gone, and our eyes
could naught behold,

Except the mildew, rust and blight on the billows of
waving gold :

But the rain is done, the harvest won, and fear is only
a dream : —

The merry shout of my manly boys comes up from the
valley stream.

God bless the boys ! I can see them now, where the
fringing willows show

The white of their leaves in the golden air above the
water's flow ;

And the stream runs on in hazy light through a drowsy
atmosphere,
While I tread again my boyhood paths and the olden
voices hear !

The nectar of childhood's guileless years from its crystal
cup I drain,
And the stream flows on its tireless way till the picture
fades again : —
The cows are at the pasture bars when I wake from my
idle dream,
And the boys are back for milking-time with trout from
the meadow stream.

AN INVITATION.

O friend, amid the city walls and weary with your care,
Why linger in the moiling town when all the world is
fair?

Come, drop your busy pen awhile and lock the sanctum
door,
And seek the breezy hills again and breathe the air once
more!

Lay down your pack and rest a bit with lilies of the lin!
You know the old sweet parable — “they neither toil nor
spin.”

The world will turn when we are gone and closed life's
busy school,
And all the wind that we can raise can't keep its axles
cool;

So let the old earth wheel away as ceaseless as it will,—
Come out upon the mountain top and on the breezy hill!

Sweet June is in her glory now, and from her minstrel
band

The strains of nature's opera are filling all the land:

So pure are all her melodies, so glad is everything,
Almost amid her leafy ways we hear the angels sing.
The maple trees are full of song, the pines are breathing
 low,
And all the happy nested birds are swinging to and fro ;
The daisies and the buttercups the meadows star with
 bloom,
The fragrant heads of clover are spilling their perfume,
And across the deep blue heaven the fleecy cloud-ships go,
Just anchored to the shadows that are swinging down
 below.

Come, camp within the shadows here beside the mountain
 stream, —
It's Summer time, and lazy time, and just the time to
 dream :
Such raptures here will find you within the woodlands
 sweet —
A mossy stone your pillow and the ripples at your feet !
Ah ! the glory of the mountains and the valleys lying
 still,
Till the morning tripping downward from the mountain
 and the hill,

In the beauty of the roses and the freshness of the dew,
Lifts the curtains of the darkness and lets the glory
 through,
Then touches with her fingers all the drowsy, feathered
 throng,
And lo! what tides of melody through all the stops of
 song!

Come, climb the hills with me, O friend! and view the
 goodly land,
The shining waters gleaming far, the purple mountain
 band;
Lift up your eyes and look afar the misty vapors through,
And lo! the tents of mountain-land are pitched against
 the blue!
There lies the fair Osseco*, already known to fame, —
Not by its Indian title, but by the pale-face name, —
The fairy isles of Brant Lake and the winding shores of
 Loon,
The purple hills that watch about the classic Lake of
 Schroon;

* Friends Lake.

And over all the warder host — the mighty mountain
wall —

Tahawus lifts his granite crown, the monarch of them all

Come, share my breezy mountain camp amid the spruce
and pine,

And from my rock verandah view the wide horizon line !
The dewy dawns are cool and sweet, and noontide's fer-
vid glow

Has naught of Summer's fever heat the sheltered valleys
know.

The days go down in crimson rest, the twilight shadows
fall,

The whip-poor-will takes up his cry, the sweet wood-
thrushes call,

And pillowed on the balsam boughs beneath the pine and
larch,

Above our heads all through the night the constellations
march !

I cannot tell what glories pass — come up and you shall
see : —

The mountains and the mountain-land are good enough
for me !

BEFORE THE FIRE.

Long since the Summer's beauty fled,
And russet Autumn, brown and sere,
Went down the slope with stately tread,
And out across the waning year.

To-night the sunset died away
In folded drifts of vapor cold,
And chill and wan the weary day
Forgot her tawny crown of gold.

We sit before the blazing brands,
The rude room lighted with their glow,
While Winter wails across the lands,
And all the hills are white with snow.

IN AUTUMN TIME.

Up the winding path we wandered
By the maples on the hill ;
And the golden waves of wheat
Swept the valley at our feet ;
And we idly dreamed and pondered
While upon the slope we wandered
Through the Autumn's lights that lingered warm
and still.

'Mid the trees the farm-house gables
Showed above the winding stream :
Woodbine climbed the walls of brown,
Up the broad roof sloping down ;
And the old barn and the stables—
Swallows nesting in the gables—
All enfolded in the silence like a dream.

Through the maple branches swaying
 Came the distant thrushes' song ;
And the red leaves whispered low
As we wandered to and fro : —
Wondered what our lips were saying
In the shadow of their swaying,
 While the airy grace of Autumn held us long.

How the fleeting years have vanished
 Since we climbed the pasture hill !
But the waving fields of gold,
Love has reaped them many fold ;
Clouds that hid the blue are banished,
And though olden years have vanished,
 All the mellow lights of Autumn linger still.

WITHOUT AND WITHIN.

The storm is wild across the hills,
The valleys deep with snow,
While in our blazing ingle-nook
We hear the strong winds blow —
But heed them not. What storm can dim
The ruddy hearth-fire's glow ?

The snows may drift, the winds may rave :
Beneath our roof-tree warm,
We watch the red blaze leap and climb —
A lithe and living form ;
While shadows dance along the wall
To music of the storm.

Safe anchored in the fire-light's calm
Love wears her regal crown,
Nor cares she how the seasons turn —
What clouds may gloom or frown :
Above the storms that vex the world
The stars of peace look down.

IN THE ADIRONDACKS.

O sunny gleam of the vanished years,
O light of the Summer's glow,
How many a faded dream appears
Through the mists of long ago !

Fair picture wrought of the golden days :
As a wizard's magic glass,
I hold you up to my wistful gaze
While the trooping visions pass.

The white clouds over the meadows swim,
While the shadows trample through,
The daisies creep to the water's rim,
And nod to the clover blue.

The broad pool lies like a mirror fair
In shadow, or sun, a-gleam,
And the fringing woodlands pictured there
Are held in a magic dream.

The wild duck floats on its waveless breast,
And the lily's pearl and gold,
And the pines above its dreamless rest
Are crooning the songs of old.

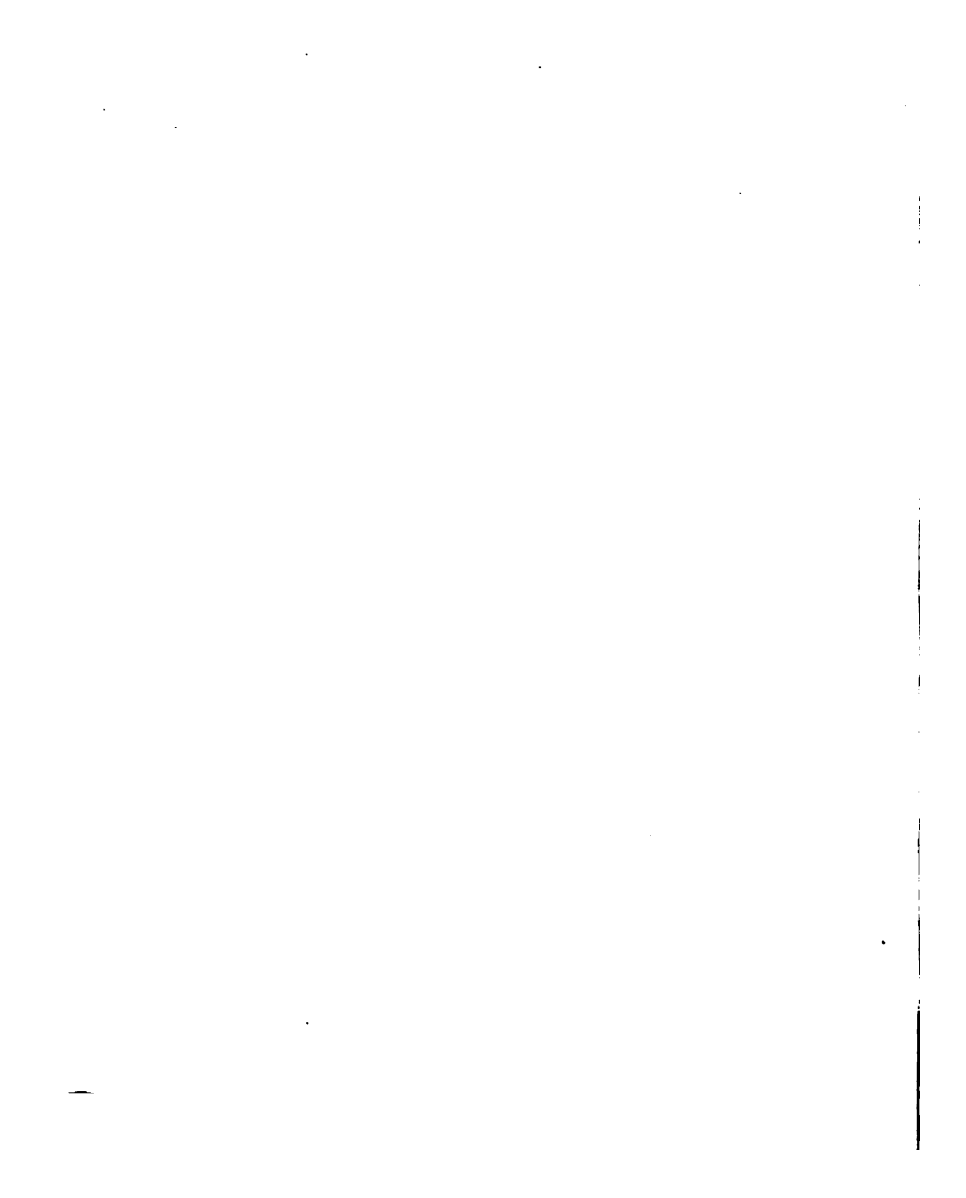
Afar the sound of the bittern's note
From the reedy shore upsprings,
The cheery cry from the fisher's throat
That follows the flash of wings.

The narrow bridge as a slender line
In the passing vision seems,
Crossed by the trail of the homeward kine
And a sun-browned boy that dreams.

His traps are there by the shadowed bay
Where the alders fringe the shore,
But his thoughts have wandered far away
To the years that wait before !

The vision fades in the waning day,
A mist on the glass appears : —
The sunny hair of the boy is gray
And touched with the frost of years.

And ever and on his dreams have run,
Lead ever by fancy's will,
But future and past to-day are one,
And the vision lingers still.



SONNETS.



AT AMESBURY.

Where softly sweet the storied river flows

His sweeter song to-day is hushed and still :

Nor robin's note, nor shy wood-thrush's trill,
He loved so well, can break the deep repose
Of gracious rest his kindly spirit knows.

His weary feet the final goal have won,—

For well he wrought until his work was done :
And now the rest which only God bestows.
Great gain is thine, O minstrel ! silent grown,
Though sad hearts ache above thy folded hands,
And quick love yearns for kindly light withdrawn :
The fitful dream of troubled life is flown,—
In guise immortal now thy being stands,
And thou hast heard the golden bells of Dawn !

BUBBLES.

They toss in rapture on the stormy sea
Of chartless azure, measureless and lone,
With spangled sheen of midnight's crown and throne —
Of noon's high splendor and immensity !
A drifting glory on the billows free,
By stormy gale, or tropic favor blown,
While ravelled sunbeams span with jewelled zone
Their starry dream of endless ecstasy : —
They break at last in airy waves that run
Through trackless ether spreading wide and far,
Whose throbbing pulses beat the regal sun,
Or softly fall upon some dreaming star :
So waves of being touch remotest spheres
And life expands through all the endless years !

IN RAVENNA.

In dreamful mood, while idle breezes play
Across the wheat, and cherry blossoms fly
Like sifted snow-flakes from an azure sky,
Through far Ravenna's grass-grown streets I stray.
A ragged throng hedge up the narrow way —
Gaunt forms of woe with ever out-stretched palms,
And loathsome lips forever asking alms,
By sculptured shrines where good men kneel to pray.
The old cathedral lifts its crumbling walls
Where Art has wrought her grand immortal dream,
And Roman queens lie still in dusky gloom : —
Then through the cloud-rack sunset splendor falls,
Transfiguring earth with such a wondrous gleam
As warms the dust in Dante's marble tomb.

TO MY MOTHER.

The year has run its measured round again :
 Its bud and leaf and bloom have drifted low,
 And over them the folded robe of snow ;
But April birds bring back the old refrain
That stirs the air when Spring resumes her reign.
 Your birthday comes while tufted branches sway,
 And o'er young blooms their airy shadows play,
And shy, sweet Mayflowers greet the April rain.
 Fourscore art thou, O Pilgrim, passing down
 The slope that leans to meet the peaceful sea ;
 Before is light, — behind, the shadows drawn : —
 What growing splendors all the hillside crown,
 While hope immortal bursts in bloom for thee
Across the twilight kindling into Dawn !

AT ALLOWAY.

Foot-sore and weary by thy roofless walls,
While folded shadows, sweet with meadow bloom,
Wave airy hands across each lichen'd tomb,
What peaceful rest upon the pilgrim falls !
From shady haunts the tender mavis calls ;
Far off the hills in Summer beauty loom,
And near the daisies print the turf with bloom,
While every scene the eager soul enthalls.
A mellow song breathes through the tasselled pine,
The open windows seem again to glow, —
With grewsome lights the hollow walls to shine,
While airy shadows waver to and fro : —
Is this a dream amid the drowsy noon ?
Or whence those hoof-beats from the Brig o' Doon ?

TO M. D. P.

How fleet the years of measured being run —

 The gracious years of beauty, fair and sweet !

 Yet who shall say thy life was incomplete,
Though end and purpose seem to us unwon ?

How can we know when any task is done ?

 We walk in twilight full of doubts and fears,

 And oft our eyes are blinded with our tears,

And we heed not the glory of the sun. —

Sweet peace for thee, O friend, immortal grown,

 The morning brings, whose glory hath begun

 In soundless dawn above our shadow-land !

Why life should fail with budded hopes unblown,

 Why fairest lilies perish one by one,

 Perchance hereafter we shall understand.

TO MR. AND MRS. RALPH H. SHAW.

To-day, O friends, across the greening wold
The South wind passes on her airy wings,
And scatters wide the treasure that she brings,
Sweet bud and bloom in green and gray and gold —
So far and wide do April's charms unfold.
Yet well I know what loss and bitter tears,
Unknown before in all the passing years,
She brings to you in measure manifold !
Yet on the cloud the bended bow she sets ! —
The loving smile and silken tress of hair,
The deep blue eyes as dewy violets,
Are safe within the Master's tender care !
And speech, so sweet — and sweeter still to grow ! —
What joy at last to see, and hear, and know !

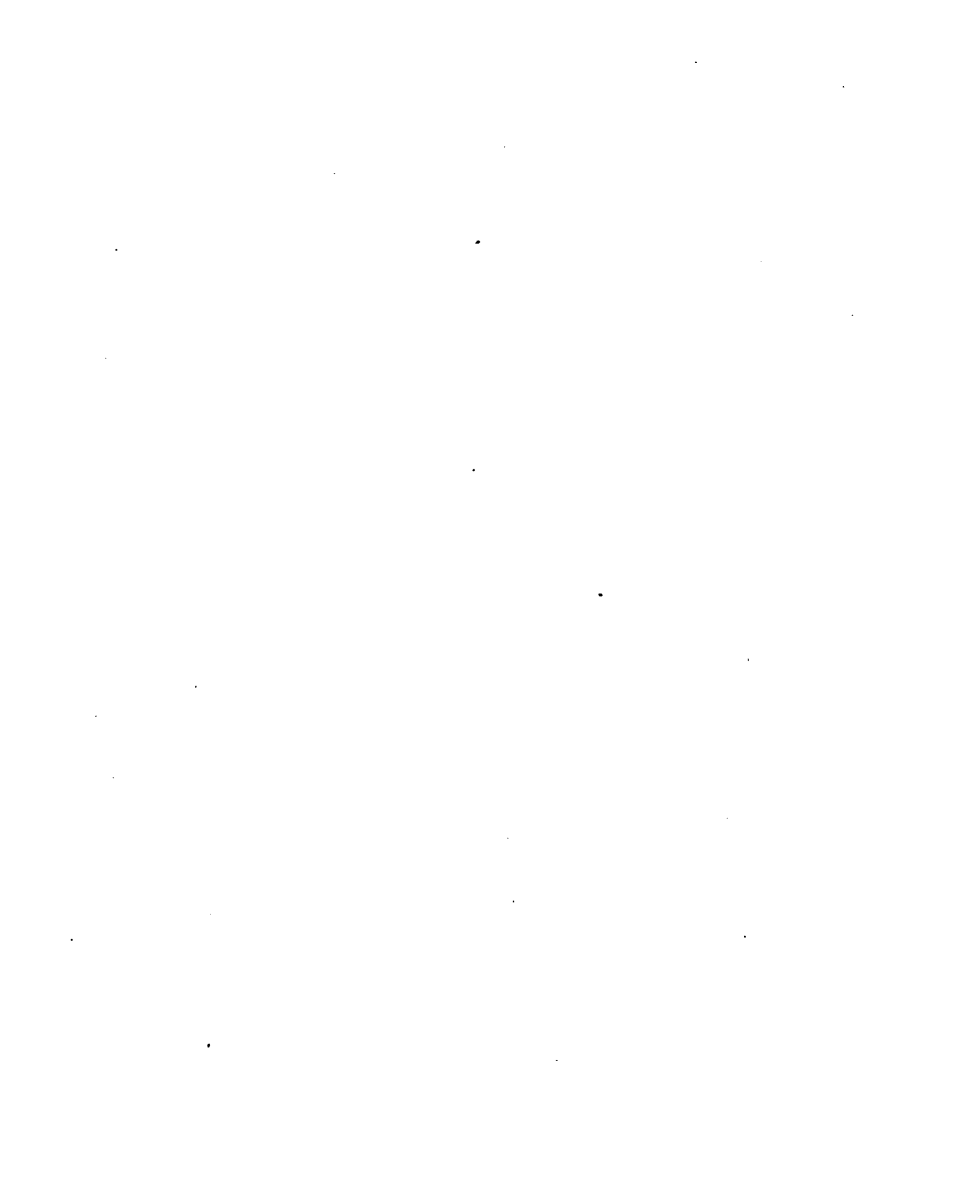
ENID.

The gray Earl's matchless daughter, fair and good ;
The whitest pearl of knightly ages long,
The worthy theme of every minstrel's song,
And queenliest type of loyal womanhood ! —
I see thee thread the lonely, tangled wood,
In silent pain, uncheered by loving word,
The while all faithless held thy angry lord,
The tender heart that beat as true heart should.
In savage halls I see him wounded lie,
And dead he seems to all beneath the blue —
His dim eyes shut to all the stars above :
Then flashes forth his quick blade at thy cry,
As back from death he springs to find thee true,
And smites him *dead* who wronged thy loyal love !

IN SEPTEMBER.

A dreamful beauty, — queen of tawny hue, —
With half-shut eyes looks out across the wold
In drowsy mood, arrayed in russet gold,
And quaffs the wine the rich earth pours anew
From airy beaker tinct with amber through.
The goldenrods, like listed knights of old,
Wave all their plumes of beauty manifold,
And asters swarm where honey-clover blew :
Green bladed flags the lowland meadows throng
With lifted clubs that dare the dragon-fly ;
The sharded locust shrills insistent song
And ghostly thistle-down goes drifting by :
A dream of sound the hazy crystal fills
From runnel-threaded wrinkle of the hills.

OCCASIONAL POEMS.



TO THOMAS C. LATTO.

ON READING HIS "MEMORIALS OF AULD LANG SYNE."

O Friend, I hold your loyal words,
That ring through all your pages,
Sweet as the trill of wild-wood birds,
And deathless as the ages :
For Love and Truth immortal are,
And Faith and Hope fail never,
And song in Summer lands afar
Shall bloom and live forever !

I read your words of tenderness ;
And Scotia's hills are looming,
As rugged as her thistle's dress,
As tender as her blooming !
Again my eager footsteps turn
And roam the land of story —
The land of Bruce and Bannockburn,
And Robin's songful glory !

Again I hear the "Twa Brigs" rave
And speechless stand and wonder,
While 'neath their arches wave on wave
Goes rippling softly under ;
And sweet and low the waters go,
In liquid murmurs chiming,
As mellow in their rhythmic flow
As Robin's matchless rhyming !

The land is fanned by Summer's wing,
With gladness brimming over,
And airy shadows sweep and swing
Across the fields of clover ;
The mavis and the laverock trill
Above the thick sown daisies,
And every bird from wood and hill
Repeats the poet's praises.

Again I see his cottage there
And stand beneath its ceiling : —
What lordly palace can compare
With Genius' straw-thatched shieling ?

And half I hear his baby-call,
Soothed by a mother's tuning,
And soft and sweet the measures fall —
A cradle-song low crooning.

The "Auld Brig" sees the waters flow
So softly in their dreaming ;
Its arch is rounded full below —
The substance and the seeming ;
And on by flowery bank and brae
The dreamy water passes,
As Doon pursues its tangled way
Amid the meadow grasses.

O Minstrel of the Scottish hills !
Full well the heart remembers,
When "Auld Lang Syne" the vision fills
And fans affection's embers !
The bonnie Highland lochs of blue,
The Norlan Sea's commotion,
The purple peaks of home peer through
The misty gray of ocean !

I marvel not the land is dear —
Its beauty ever springing ;
That in the passing breeze you hear
The bonnie Blue Bells ringing : —
The heart is in the childhood land
Though far the feet are straying,
And old-time pictures fair and grand
Reveal the boyhood's playing !

On Scotia's hills the heather grows,
So loved by sons and daughters,
The thistle grander than the rose,
Or lily of the waters :
And so each loyal heart yet turns
To share her fadeless glory —
The sturdy land of Robert Burns,
The land of song and story !

To you, O Friend ! I reach my hand
With heart-throb warm and tender,
While over all the harvest land
Glows sunset's dying splendor.

TO THOMAS C. LATTO.

91

Sing on, O Bard ! thy ringing lay
In sweet and gladsome measures :
Thy melodies shall live for aye
While fond hearts hoard their treasures.

ALMA MATER.

Our Alma Mater once again !
How brief the time appears !
Yet since we fondly lingered here
'Tis thirty golden years.

I note the changes round me wrought —
For time will changes bring ;
But yet the same wise scepter rules,
The same benignant King.

Yet scarcely can the sunshine fall
As in the days of yore,
With one glad presence from our midst
Gone out forever more.

How swift the years have winged their flight,
As arrows cleave the air !
And crowns that wore the sunshine then
Are silvered now with care.

How fair we built our castles then,
What stately towers had they !
What glorious dreams we cherished here
Beneath the smiles of May !

We roamed the Hudson's bonny braes,
We angled, swam, and sailed,
And deemed that wisdom dwelt with us,—
But, Mercy ! how we failed !

O vanished days ! O happy throng !
O blessed school-day joys !
If I but close my eyes I see
The old-time girls and boys.

They pass before my waiting gaze
Fair as the morning light,
As on the wings of swiftest thought
They homeward throng to-night.

I need not call the muster roll
Of such as round me stand,
Who throng me from the happy homes
That bless our loyal land.

They come from grain-sown prairie lands
Whose billows wander free,
From mountain slopes that downward run
To meet the Western Sea.

From North and South and East they spring —
The old familiar forms,
And from the sunny isle that sleeps
Amid the tropic storms.

But some heed not the breezy call
That rings from strand to strand,
But crowned, they watch and wait for us
To hail the Better Land.

O poet soul ! whose trammelled song
Burst life's imprisoning bars,
How rings her glad triumphant song
Beyond the eternal stars !

Some passed from blood-red battle fields
Amid the stormy fray :
Some wore the loyal Union Blue,
And some the Southern Gray.

But where they lie on hill or plain,
In starry vesture dressed,
The Summers spread forget-me-nots
Above their dreamless rest.

Sleep on in peace, O nameless throng !
Unwatched by loving eyes :
The world is grander since ye lived
And wrought your sacrifice.

O loving hearts that linger yet !
The shortest life is long.
If we but win our grandest dream
And build our castle strong.

God bless you, brothers, sisters, all,
Time lightly touch each brow,
Till you shall take your retrospect
Just thirty years from now !

TO MRS. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH.

December 26, 1894.

O Friend ! beside Potomac stream,
Slow winding through his quiet dream
In winter-sunshine's paling gleam,
I greet thee, while December stands
With snowy hair and folded hands
And looks across the faded lands !

Still holds the wan and wasted year
The gladsome echoes sweet and clear
That lately trembled on his ear ;
The peace on earth, the angels told,
Good will to men, the chorus rolled
Above the Syrian hills of old !

While Christmas cheer his warm heart fills
A wave of joy his being thrills —
Your birth-dawn lights the morning hills !

And love will plead and lips will pray
For blessing on thy crown to-day —
For sunshine on the pilgrim's way.

O swift winds from the Northern clime,
Waft on thy wings this tangled rhyme,
And breathe good cheer for evening time !
So brighter shall the star-glow be —
The shadows pass, the darkness flee
And leave the peace of Galilee.

IN MEMORIAM.

T. C. L.

Love's tears above his final rest
Whose feet have wandered long,
And flowers upon the grave of him
Whose soul was in his song.

'Tis sunset — yet we cannot deem
The day's fair glory flown,
While hill-tops brighten in the gleam
Of sunshine all its own.

Far off his bells of morning rang
Their tuneful minstrelsy
Where bleak Fife Ness looks out across
The gray old Norlan Sea.

There happy boyhood played and dreamed,
There read the blended lines
Of ocean's song and runic hymns
Of old Norwegian pines.

Though far from thence the minstrel strayed,
As feet will always roam,
He kept the dreams of morning-time,
He sang the songs of home.

His heart was true to childhood's land,
Her lochs and crags and fells,
The purple heather of her hills,
Her bonnie, sweet blue-bells.

His soul was full of tenderness,
His spirit brave and strong ;
He loved the pure and beautiful
And battled with the wrong.

With unassuming grace he wrought,
By deed and word and pen :
In white he walked amid the throng —
A Galahad of men !

And till our hands shall clasp again
Where tears shall never start,
Fond love will fold in lavender
The poet of the heart.

IN MEMORIAM.

Sweet peace is thine, O Friend ! at last,
And Heaven's divinest rest, —
With heather of the Highland hills
Upon thy manly breast.

THE MOTHER'S CALL.

READ AT THE REUNION OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS OF FORT
EDWARD INSTITUTE AT THE SAINT DENIS HOTEL, NEW YORK,
APRIL 24, 1894.

'T was in the bud and blossom time,
When April, young and fair,
Was hanging robes of willow green
Upon the misty air ;
While miskodeed and violet
Brought odors for a king,
And dandelions starred the grass
With sandal prints of Spring ; —

When singing birds were come again
And bubbling o'er with song,
Just making up for all the time
Of dreary absence long ;
When April winds shook out the buds
In tufted leaves and frills,
And grace and beauty hand in hand
Went roaming o'er the hills ; —

THE MOTHER'S CALL.

Then clear and sweet across the land,
High ringing over all,
I heard above the whirl of wings
Dear Alma Mater's call!
Who could mistake the tender voice,
The kindly word that cheers,
As when she took us by the hand
And led us through the years?

Again we walked the winding paths
By Hudson's classic stream,
And all the glory of the years
Came back as in a dream:
The purple hills were crowned with light,
The sky with sunset's glow,
And song and laughter pealed and rang
As many years ago.

O welcome voice that called me far
Beneath the morning skies,
Till glory of the April days
Had faded from my eyes:

I heard no more the sparrows' trill,
The blue-birds' tender lay,
But over vale and over hill
Came songs from far away.

Such charm is in the Mother-call,
Wide as her children roam,
From North and South and East and West,
They fondly hasten home :
Though some perchance, with misty eyes,
Look forth with longing vain,
In heart they gather at her knee —
They all are home again !

Dear comrades of the long ago !
A leal and royal band,
We reach across the years to clasp
Again each loyal hand.
We look into each other's eyes,
Oft dimmed perchance by tears,
And lo ! the well remembered smiles
That lit the olden years !

THE MOTHER'S CALL.

God bless you ! More we cannot say,
For April mists will rise,
Though love will set the bow of peace
Across the clouded skies : —
Long live our Alma Mater dear,
Fond Mother of us all ;
And may we never stray so far
We cannot hear her call.

TO AN INFANT BOY.

Fairest of the treasures
All the ages hold,
More than gems of beauty,
More than crowns of gold !
Sceptres, thrones and kingdoms
Of this hoary earth —
These are airy bubbles
Weighed against thy worth.

Fleeting as the shadows,
Restless as the sea,
These shall pass and vanish —
Thou immortal be !
Truest love unspoken
Croons for thee its song,
While unseen the angels
All about thee throng.

Tenderly may white wings,
 Flashing down the spheres,
Lead thee through the shadows
 Of the coming years : —
Softly at the sunset,
 When the years shall cease,
Fold thee in their loving arms
 At the gates of peace.

TO REV. A. J. LOCKHART.

May 5, 1893.

When dear old Crusoe, prince of boyhood's prime,
Kept his lone outlook from his island shore,
He scored the weary years of passing time
Upon a rude post by his cabin door ;
And far across the heaving waste of blue,
Or restless billows, white with tumbling foam,
He watched and waited all the seasons through
For some white sail to waft him fondly home.

And so, O friend, lest you forget this day,
And miss its glory in your northern clime,
Nor know the coming of the smile of May,
I notch your door-post with this friendly rhyme.
May-time has come, and on her sunny wings,
She bears life's bloom and beauty all untold,
To crown the songful natal day she brings —
To weave again for you her pearl and gold.

All hail, your birthday ! How the swift years go !

I may not pause to count the notches o'er —

The Summer songs, the swirls of Winter snow —

I only pray, God make them more and more !

And when above the dim horizon line

You see at last the white wings gleaming far,

May Hope and Love, with gentle breath divine,

Fill all the sails when you shall cross the Bar !

MY BIRTHDAY.

A rosy surf of morning light
Breaks on the crags of dawn,
The starry watches of the night
Are ended and withdrawn.

Sunward the drowsy earth returns,
Slow kindling in his ray,
Till all the hill-tops blush and burn
Above my natal day.

The sunshine floods the morning through,
The shadows disappear : —
No breath of cloud across the blue,
Above the rounded year.

Be glad, my heart ! thy pæan raise
For years of bounty long,
Lift on the wings of grateful praise
The singer's humble song.

MY BIRTHDAY.

For bounties sweet and manifold,
For wealth of loving care,
O let the gladdest praise be told
That ever stirred the air.

Across the slope I journey down,
Nor cease the glad refrain,
And trust His mercies still to crown
The years that yet remain.

TO A CHILD.

Listen to the robin's strain !
See him all the day,
Singing with his might and main,
Swinging on the spray.

Early in the morning dew
Springing with the lark,
And busy all the day through
Till the dusk and dark.

Ever toiling where he strays,
With a courage strong,
Cheering all the shady ways
With a sunny song.

Never blends a note of blame
With his happy strain,
Singing always just the same
In the sun or rain.

Heed thou what the robin sings
In the golden light,
Take the lesson that he brings,
Keep it in thy sight.

Though we may not have the art
Breathing through his line,
Let us keep a cheery heart,
In the shade and shine.

TO GEORGE GARY BUSH.

March 19, 1893.

O Friend ! across my garden sere
The scattered snow-flakes show,
And cold above the lifeless year
The chilly March winds blow.
The snowdrop and the violet
No airy odors spill,
For they are softly dreaming yet
Beneath a snowy frill.

And yet, though Spring belated grieves
And chill is in the air,
The glossy green of orange leaves
And blossoms sweet and rare —
A breath from out the Southland sped —
Send fragrance through the room,
And o'er our native wild-flowers dead
Give prophecy of bloom.

Amid the Southland groves of balm,
Where starry blossoms shine,
Take thou this greeting 'neath the palm —
The greeting of the pine.
And more, O Friend, our words would tell
Of loyal love that cheers,
Of winding pathways trodden well
Through fifty rounded years !

Your Birthday ! How the years go by !
How swiftly sped and told
Since under childhood's fairy sky
You chased the rainbow's gold !
O brief illusion,— quickly past,—
As sunset vision grand :—
For you life's perfect dream at last
In Youth's immortal Land.

MEMORIAL POEM.

RECITED AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICES AT BRANDYWINE
CEMETERY, MAY 30, 1893.

Where May time crowns to-day the land
With Summer's song and gleam,
And spreads her bloom with lavish hand
Above the soldier's dream,
Amid the olden harvest shine
The battle smoke hung low,
And veiled the slopes of Brandywine
A hundred years ago !

These hills have heard the cannon peal,
These vales the bugle blow,
These sunny slopes the clash of steel,
The charge of haughty foe !
These flowers may wear the crimson stains
Caught from the ruddy wine,
That ebbed from Valor's wounded veins
O'er hills of Brandywine !

How well they fought their deeds shall tell —
Those sturdy sons of yore :
Columbia guards their memory well
And shall forever more : —
For God and man, and Freedom's cause,
The fireside's cheerful glow,
For equal rights and equal laws —
A hundred years ago !

They fought and fell, but grandly won :
No martyr dies in vain ;
In Freedom's cause no deed is done
But wins eternal gain !
How fair Columbia's walls appear
In spite of alien foe,
For Freedom gained her birthright here
A hundred years ago !

O'er land and sea her banner flew —
A constellated flame :
A hundred years her glory grew,
A hundred years her fame ;

Then red War swept the clouded land
As in the days of old,
For Treason sought with bloody hand
To pluck her crown of gold !

Then from the glow of warm hearth-fires,
With battle shout and song,
Sprang loyal sons of loyal sires,
Four hundred thousand strong !
O'er fields of blood their valor swept,
Led on by bannered stars —
In prison pens their old love kept,
And gloried in their scars !

On many a field their banners fell,
On many a field they won,
Till bells of joy rang Treason's knell
And War's red work was done !
O bravely did they dare and well,
Like loyal sires of yore,
And fields like Gettysburg may tell
Why they return no more !

While May time, with her roses crowned,
Spreads wide her flowery hem
In folds of bloom above each mound,
In tenderest love of them,
We too may spread our blooms once more
Above each soldier's grave,
White as the loyal love they bore,
Red as the blood they gave !

O heroes dead, for Freedom's sake !
O martyr fame that grows !
No more the bugle call shall break
Your loyal dream's repose.
Sleep on in peace, immortal band,
Sweet is the rest ye know,
While over all our ransomed land
The stars ye saved shall glow !

O Land ! let all thy bugles blow
Where sleep the true and brave,
And train forget-me-nots to grow
On every Union grave !

The past is past, War's flags are furled
Above the blooms of May,
While Peace, white winged, above the world
Enfolds the Blue and Gray !

IN THE DANDELION-TIME.

TO R. H. S., LOWELL, MASS.

Poet, by the classic stream,
Winding past the Minstrel's dream,
Singing through leaf-haunted ways
By her bonny banks and braes :
Thee, O Friend, while everywhere
Green frills fret the misty air,
Would I greet with rambling rhyme
In the Dandelion-time !

By the alder dusted rills,
Tufted maples on the hills,
Spice-bush knotted deep with gold,
Crocus bursting through the mold,
Vale and meadow, up and down,
Lifting green blades through the brown, —
By these tokens you may know
How the quickened pulses flow,

How, with subtle hint and sign,
Teeming clod and budding vine,
April comes and weaves her rhyme
For the Dandelion-time !

Lo ! her presence far and near —
Tricksy fairy of the year !
Stretching out her magic wand
Over all the greening land : —
Hill and valley give her room,
Building for her tents of bloom !
From the mountains to the sea,
Over slopes of Ossipee,
All things win an added grace
From the beauty of her face !
Even though a cloud appears
She will laugh amid her tears ;
For with joy her pulses thrill
And her heart is merry still,
While the meadows wide unrolled,
Set with mimic stars of gold,
Blaze with glory like Orion's
In the time of Dandelions !

Why is April always glad ?
Why is she in beauty clad ?
Why should red lips all the while
Curl in such a happy smile ?
Why to mellow music sweet
Should she every year repeat
All her wonders of delight
With a patience infinite ?

Listen, while I whisper low : —
It was many years ago
That a poet had his birth
While she glorified the earth !
So since then no year so long
But she sets therein her song :
All her beauty manifold, —
All her fairy pearl and gold !
Thus, though years ago he came,
Keeps she still his birth and name,
And with tender, loving care,
Cools his forehead, lifts his hair,
Who from April caught his rhyme
In the Dandelion-time !

EASTER DAWN.

O Easter dawn, glad Easter dawn !
The shadows of the night are furled,
And morning lights the waking world, —
The watch is past, the guard withdrawn !

The ponderous stone is rolled away !
From rifted tomb where slept the Slain,
Our risen Lord comes forth again, —
And Earth is glad on Easter day.

O Hope of Earth, immortal born !
Our faith with rapture soars and sings,
And Heaven is stirred with vibrant wings
Above the happy Easter morn !

WAYSIDE RHYMES.

Dear Wife, beneath the Summer smile
That lights our pilgrim way,
We pause for wayside rest awhile,
And bid the sweet hours stay.

Our weary feet have wandered long
Beyond our hopes and fears,
Through Winter's snow and Summer's song—
The half of fifty years.

Now let the vanished days return,
The morning's flush and glow,
While o'er the hill-tops blush and burn
The lights of long ago.

How wide the bending arms of blue
The waiting earth enfold ;
How tender, loyal, sweet and true
The vows at noontide told !

How fair the thronging pictures run !

What joy the vision fills —
The star-glow and the set of sun
Amid the Northern hills !

The hillside fringed with sombre woods,
The mountain slope beyond,
The woodland where the twilight broods,
The lily-haunted pond !

We hear again the insect throng,
Their noonday measures shrill,
The pine trees croon a low, sweet song
When all the air is still.

No passing cloud the picture blurs :
As fair to-day it seems
As when the sunrise through the firs
Awoke from starry dreams.

The hours pass on — the vision cheers
Our wayside rest to-day,
And all the beauty of the years
Is folded round our way.

In pilgrim robes of singing clad,
In Love's divinest air,
Two hearts that beat as one are glad,
And all the world is fair.

A CHRISTMAS POEM.

While the solemn, starry splendor
Of the midnight trance sublime
Waited over tower and temple
On the Eastern hills of time,

Ringing clear and sweet and tender
From the rapt, exultant throng
Fell the heavenly echoes earthward —
Came the herald angels' song.

Lo! the music and the rapture
Down the starry spaces rolled,
And the greeting for the coming
Of the King so long foretold!

And the shepherds in the valleys,
On the hillsides, in the glen,
Heard the "glory in the highest!"
And the sweet "good-will to men!"

“Peace on Earth!” they sang exulting,
 Bending low on shining wing
Over Bethlehem’s lowly manger,
 O’er the world’s exalted King!

Pilgrims hailed the princely Stranger —
 Saw his glory from afar,
Came to kneel beside the manger,
 Led by splendor of the star.

Hither came the kings and sages
 With their gifts of myrrh and gold,
Frankincense and adoration —
 Homage of the nations old.

So He came, the King immortal,
 When the flags of war were furled, —
Came the Christ of all the ages,
 Came the hope of all the world!

“Peace on Earth!” the wondrous story
 Ringing down the centuries lone: —
How the sweet good-will has wandered!
 How the white-winged dove has flown!

And the starry song of midnight
Holdeth yet its potent sway,
Since the singing of the angels
Gladdens all our hearts to-day.

For the Christmas-tide rejoices
All the loyal lands of earth
That with loving adoration
Hail with joy Immanuel's birth.

Priceless gift of heavenly treasure,
Born of love and matchless grace,
Reaching earthward and embracing
Every kindred, tongue and race !

Joy of all the waiting nations,
Light where gloomy shadows toss,
Refuge for the lone and weary
Underneath the lifted Cross !

Peace and love and praise ascending —
So the shining message ran :
Love that conquers all the ages,
Moulds the brotherhood of man.

Rise, O nations, in the darkness,
Catch the song the Christmas brings ;
Then shall all the kingdoms own Him
Lord of lords and King of kings !

Ring, O minstrelsy of angels !
Never may thy singing cease
Till the world with homage crown him,
King immortal — Prince of Peace !

A GREETING.

May this New Year's caressing
Make glad, O Friend, with blessing :
Its passing charm with story,
Its sunshine lend thee glory.

His peace that passeth knowing
Be thine — a river flowing ;
His presence thee attending
Lead down the slope descending.

May all thy years rest lightly,
Thy evening-time glow brightly,
Till, past the stars adorning,
You hear the bells of morning.

These words our lips would render
Amid the New Year's splendor : —
Know thou by this brief token
That only love hath spoken.

THE TIME OF GOLDENROD.

O. W. H.

Once on a time there came to earth
A laughing boy of pith and worth,
A minstrel he, who had his birth
In time of Goldenrod.

The glad earth brightened when he came,
And brighter burned Love's hallowed flame,
And now the whole world holds his fame
Who came with Goldenrod.

His song has cheered like summer rain,
With laughter filled the lips of pain,
And made the graybeard young again,
Amid the Goldenrod.

To-day for him Love weaves her crown,
And calls her choicest blessings down,
While waning Summer, turning brown,
Brings back the Goldenrod.

Yet many times may he behold
The fading Summers growing old,
The asters' fringe — the plumes of gold —
The time of Goldenrod.

OCTOBER.

TO JOHN D. ROSS.

With blush of crimson and with tint of gold,
He touches all the woodlands and they stand
Transfigured in their beauty by his wand,
As tricky fairies wrought in days of old !
The harvest fields have all their treasure told,
And brown and bare they lie through dreamful days
That wrap the hills in mellow Autumn haze,
And with late asters star the stubbled wold.
The frosted burs their thorny spheres divide,
'Mid rustling leaves the ripened chestnuts fall,
While happy children through the woodlands call,
And childhood's echoes wander far and wide.
So fair October's gray and gold appear : —
And lo ! your birthday passes down the year !

CAMP OSSIPEE.

Thy wish, O Friend, abides with me,
That I might pitch my camp with thee
Upon the slopes of Ossipee.

And though September spreads her gold,
She lures me not with wealth untold,
Nor weans me from the wish I hold.

Her smile is sweet ; her witching eyes
Beam softly ; yet against the skies
I fain would see the hills arise.

Whatever paths my feet pursue,
Beneath the bonnie lift o' blue,
In starry dusk, or morning dew,

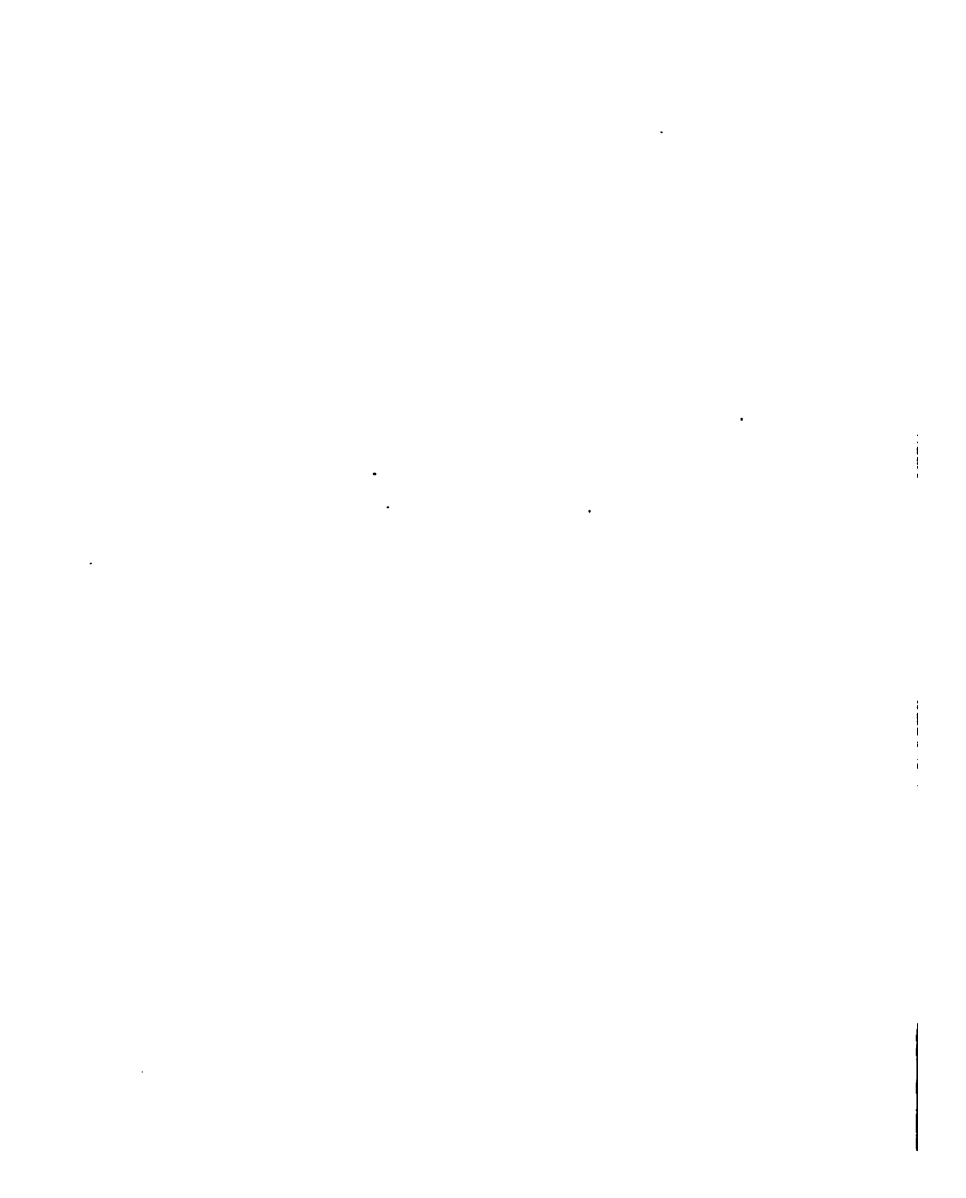
By laughter of the meadow stream,
Across the harvest's russet gleam,
The wish still haunts me like a dream,—

Till near is far and far is near,
And through the hazy atmosphere
The longed-for mountain peaks appear.

When song is rife of upland rills,
When wooded vales and granite hills
My dreamy vision holds and fills,—

When distance fades and shadows flee,
Do I not camp, O Friend, with thee
Upon the slopes of Ossipee?

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.



SUSQUECO.

Through the shadows cool and dim,
Willow-woven by its rim,
Threading meadow lands of bloom
Where the flowers give it room,
Through a sweet idyllic dream
Runs the naiad haunted stream,—
Ever crooning sweetest song
Where the reeds and rushes throng : —
Through the valley's green and gold
When the tides of battle rolled
In the stormy days of old,
Softly glide in rhythmic flow
The pictured waves of Susqueco !

Susqueco, O Susqueco !
How thy singing waters flow —
From the fountains in the hills,
From the laughing, limpid rills,

Fed by crystal dew and rain,
Gleaming through the fields of grain,
Dreaming by the slopes of fern
Where the lady-slippers burn,
Where the ponderous mill-wheels turn,
Past the miller's dusty doors,
By the lily whitened shores,
While the sunshine softly lies
On thy mirror of the skies !

Susqueco, O Susqueco !
How dreamily thy waters go
Through the greenwood's dusky glades,
Past the blue-flags' lifted blades,
Where the iris spreads its wings
And in royal purple swings !
While thy liquid measures float
With the thrush's mellow note,
Dragon-flies in airy grace,
In the sun-laced shadow space,
Flit and flash across thy face,—
Up and down and to and fro —
Blue-mailed Knight of Susqueco.

Susqueco, O Susqueco !
Whither do thy waters flow ?
Under arches builded wide —
Rounded circles in the tide,
Under bridges mossy brown,
Through the meadows flowing down,
Through the woodland and the lea,
Singing ever towards the sea,
Where thy song is hushed at last
When the idle dream is passed
In the infinite and vast : —
Thither do thy waters flow,
Stream of beauty — Susqueco !

MY GARDEN.

A narrow space of God's green earth
Framed in by meadow lands,
A precious rood of matchless worth
My humble garden stands.

No manor broad, but deep and high
The fair estate I claim ;
Far widening upward to the sky,
And narrowing down to flame.

From central fires whose tides are rolled
O'er glowing reefs and bars,
The princely title-deeds I hold
To unmapped realms of stars.

What tints of cloud, what fields of blue,
What starry hosts appear
In grand procession, marching through
My arc of heaven's sphere !

Each subtle force alike that thrills
The poised world with its spell,
From sparry caves to snow-crowned hills
My garden feels as well.

By tropic breath of Summer glow
And sting of Winter frost,
By ministries of rain and snow
Its teeming clods are crossed.

And instinct with a vital power
The changing seasons bring,
What varied forms of leaf and flower
In rarest beauty spring !

The cherry lifts its tinted bloom,
The peach its tinted crown,
And apple-blossoms breathe perfume
When these have drifted down.

In silent ranks on either hand,
With spears that threat or warn,
The red-briars in their beauty stand,
The black in mail of thorn.

The grape-vine spreads its tendrils wide
And dreams of vintage day,
The pear tree lifts its glossy pride,
The quince its dusty gray.

And tufted bloom and tasselled blade,
That drink the rain and dew,
Fulfil the royal promise made
While yet the world was new.

For these are rare, sweet prophecies,
Spelled out in petaled words,
'Mid whispers of the Summer breeze
And singing of the birds.

And since through seed and blade and ear
His matchless purpose runs,
Who holds within His hand the sphere
And swings the stars and suns,—

E'en now where hang the blooms of morn
I see the ripe fruit throng,
And in the clashing blades of corn
I hear the reapers' song.

From quince's gold a breath of musk,
And from the grape-hung wall,
And in the quiet evening dusk
The ripened peaches fall.

And so a loyal faith I hold
In sun and rain and soil,
That Autumn time will yield her gold
To crown my weary toil.

DECEMBER.

All hail to the white December —
The frosty graybeard old !
In starry sheen of jewels clad
And ermine robes of cold !
All hail the mighty brotherhood
Of dead Decembers past !
We greet them all again in this —
The latest and the last.

A song for the grand December
That fills the world with cheer,
And brightens down the drifted slope
Of all the waning year !
From out the night that held the world
A newer hope is born,
And darkness yields again to light
From starry Capricorn.

A cheer for the old December !
For all his hands have wrought —
For kindly deeds of charity,
And widening realms of thought :
For poets' songs and martyr crowns,
For truth and honor grand,
For sturdy faith and honest hope
That light to-day the land.

O honor the brave December !
Whose wealth the mountains show,
Whose hills in wondrous beauty lift
The treasures of his snow.
His stormy music, wild and grand,
Wails through the forest trees,
And beats upon the rocky strand
The thunder of his seas.

O grand are thy scenes, December,
As, with thy flags unfurled,
Thy stormy winds in might have swept
The marches of the world, —

The brightening crowns of liberty
In every age and clime,
And victories for human weal
In all the coming time !

And farther, O white December,
Thy starry vision runs,
Across the track of dreamless years,
Beyond the circling suns,
When over the sheen of midnight
The song the wide earth fills
Fell softly on the shepherd throng
Upon the Syrian hills !

O crown him, the grand December,
With gems no king may wear !
O clothe him in spotless ermine,
Blazoned with jewels rare !
For under his star-hung spaces,
Hard by the gates of morn,
With peace on earth, good-will to men,
The blessed Christ was born.

And brightly, O brave December,
Thy starry watches shone,
To give the treasure-laden kings
A manger and a throne !
And on the midnight's lonely palms
Thy starlight lay of old,
While sages brought their gifts of myrrh
And frankincense and gold !

For the joy of earth, December,
We join the shining throng,
To lift again the wondrous strain —
The olden Christmas song !
O Hope of earth ! O Light of life !
By faith we follow Thee,
As they of old beneath the palms
Through vales of Galilee !

O bringer of Dawn, December !
Above thy shadows furled,
The morning light across the land
Has touched the dreaming world !

And down through all the coming time,
Unsealed the prophets' ken,
Hath seen our King, Immanuel,
Throned in the hearts of men.

IN BETHANY.

From out the city street,
With weary, aching feet,
Beyond the gates wide thrown,
And hot, brown walls of stone,
Amid the wild flowers set
On slopes of Olivet,
Across the hillside brown,
By foot-path winding down,
Through restful, airy shade
The drooping palm-trees made,
He journeyed down to rest —
As Love's divinest Guest —
In Bethany.

A home without a name
Until the Wanderer came !
What love was thine outspread
Above His homeless head !

What tender, thoughtful care
Was busy serving there, —
Planning how He might eat,
Cooling His wayworn feet !
While one, from care apart,
Gave Him her loyal heart,
And thus her love confessed
To love's divinest Guest —
In Bethany.

O heart of mine, make way
For Guest divine to-day !
Come, Thou, with presence sweet,
And make my life complete !
As from the mountain side,
Come in, with me abide,
And here thy rest shall be !
And while I sup with Thee
Let Thy sweet accents heard
Mould thought and will and word ;
And thus my love be told,
As Mary's love of old —
In Bethany.

AULD KIRK ALLOWAY.

O Alloway ! O Alloway !
Thy roofless walls are fair to-day !
Above thee azure skies are spread,
Around thee sleep the silent dead : —
By lichen'd stone and leaning slate
My eager footsteps pause and wait,
While soft June airs around thee play,
Auld haunted Kirk o' Alloway.

A dusty pilgrim at thy shrine,
O Alloway ! what rest is mine !
Within the grateful shade I lie,
Beneath the broad, leaf-fretted sky,
Safe sheltered from the noonday gleam,
What airy shadows haunt my dream !
What gray wraiths out of mist-land stray
And throng thee round — Auld Alloway !

The daisied turf is sweet to-day
Around thy walls, O Alloway !
The minstrel's song hath lent its charm,
And time can never do thee harm !
Though swift years go, and safe below
Tam sleeps beneath the hawthorns' snow,
Yet still thy world-wide fame will stay,
Witch-haunted Kirk o' Alloway !

HOMeward BOUND.

Swiftly the years are flying,
Longer the shadows lying,
Sweeter the voices crying
 Out of the mist to me : —
Ever the tides are going,
Ever the winds are blowing,
Onward the waves are flowing
 Over the restless sea.

Onward forever drifting,
Waters and winds a-shifting,
Under the cloud, or rifting,
 Either in shade or shine ;
Ever though gales are veering —
Aimless the drift appearing —
Ever the end is nearing,
 Nearing the misty line !

HOMEWARD BOUND.

Ever the sails are filling,
Ever the winds are willing,
Piping a song and trilling

Over the leaning mast : —
Swiftly the shores are leaving,
Swiftly the waters cleaving,
Over the ocean heaving —
Over the Bar at last.

EVENTIDE.

Out of the leaves of the poplars calling
Wind-blown voices mellow and clear,
In cadence sweet on the rapt ear falling,
Soft as the lisp of the leaves I hear.

And lo ! the sunshine gleams on the shallows,
The old day dies in an amber dream,
Above the flight of the chimney swallows
And the plash of feet in the meadow stream.

ENDYMION.

On purple Latmos' rugged steep
The Poet-boy forsook his sheep
To woo the airy dreams of sleep.

What matter where the flocks are fed,
Or where they make their nightly bed,
In lonely wilds unshepherded?

In slumbrous rest uncrossed by care
He breathes the sweet untroubled air,
While stars look down upon him there!

On Latmian hills how fair he seems,
Kissed by pale Luna's silver beams —
Immortal youth! — immortal dreams!

WHITTIER.

But twice the white snows drifting down,
But twice the meadow's blowing,
Since last the sunshine touched his crown
While Autumn leaves were turning brown,—
And none could stay his going.

Yet name and fame have dearer grown,
And farther sweeter ringing,
His words across the world have flown,—
On every wind of heaven blown
The sweetness of his singing.

While ages pass his royal worth
Shall make sublimer story,
And love untold shall bless his birth,
And that white name he bore on earth
Shall gather more of glory.

1894.

FISHING.

Shade of Isaac Walton !
What a fruitful theme !
Calling back the Summers,
Vanished like a dream : —
How the olden visions
Rise before our gaze,
As we wander backward
To the olden days !

Ah ! the joys of childhood !
What can these surpass ? —
Turn the magic mirror,
Look into the glass.
Down the brook we wandered,
Happy as a loon,
Idly playing truant
All the afternoon.

Wading through the grasses,
Angling in the pool,
With the frogs and dragon-flies
All in nature's school :
How the stolen pleasures
Lingered long and late,—
Catching shining minnows,
Using flies for bait.

Though the shades of evening
Closed the fruitless search,
And the home-returning
Gave a taste of birch,—
Naught can dim the mirror,
Naught the dream efface,
And we hold it fondly
Through the years of grace.

Though since then we've angled
With our rods and reels,
After trout and white-fish,
Lobsters, crabs and eels,

Known perchance the rapture
Trembling through the line,
As we tugged at blue-fish
In the ocean brine,—

Fadeless visions linger : —
Summers faded long
Hold a deeper rapture,
Breathe a sweeter song !
'T is the bliss of fishing
With a rod and line —
A slender shoot of alder
And a bit of twine.

'T is the endless rapture,
To blessedness akin,
Fishing with a barbless hook
Fashioned from a pin.
Other triumphs vanish :
Lingers yet this dream —
Angling in the shallows
Of the winding stream.

MIDNIGHT AND DAWN.

What glory out-gleams when the midnight springs
O'er the brown earth's dream in the starlight gray,
And the luminous fleet in the offing swings,
While the night-swan floats on her world-wide wings,
Down the white star-foam of the Milky-Way.

The glory that streams from the worlds thick sown,
Like bubbles adrift on the chartless seas,
Through infinite, untracked spaces blown, —
The suns of the universe wandering lone,
And the matchless grace of the Pleiades.

The fading of dreams when the night is done :
For the white moon sails while the tides are drawn,
And the pale stars follow her one by one
In the growing sheen of the climbing sun,
Till they faint and die in a dream of dawn.

IN THE MORNING.

Fresh the tides of being run
With the coming of the sun ;
Soon the shadows turn to gray
In the glory of the day,
And the spiders' web is seen
All in diamond dusted sheen,
While the morning-glory swings
From the trellis where it clings,
And the day is fresh and new
'Neath the chrism of the dew,
In the morning.

Tides of music, sweet and strong,
Flood the holy air with song :
Every bird a minstrel seems,
Singing out his gladdest dreams ;
Every song a note that thrills
All the silence of the hills ;

Every breath of rapture tells
Of the joy that throbs and swells,
When the walls of night give way
And the shadows turn to gray,
 In the morning.

Morning glories fade and fly,
Other dawns regild the sky ;
Other songs of rapture raise
Endless symphonies of praise : —
May the webs which we have spun
Shine like jewels in the sun,
When shall break the final dawn
And the shadows be withdrawn,
And our lives just bloom anew,
Fresh with sweet, immortal dew,
 In the morning.

A LITTLE WHILE.

A little while, a little while,
Just the winding of a mile,
Full of beauty to beguile,
 And the footpath meets the highway
At the turning of the stile.

A little while, a little gleam,
Just the winding of the stream,
With a rhythm most supreme,
 And the waters sleep forever
In the ocean's mighty dream.

A little while, a little way,
Just the passing of a day,
While the feet go oft astray,
 And the evening weaves its shadows
In the twilight cold and gray.

A little while, a loving smile,
Just to keep the heart from guile : —
It is such a little while
 Till our footsteps meet the Highway
At the turning of the stile.

AT GAD'S HILL.

The chamber where the master mused,
Then touched his wizard pen,
And scattered tears and laughter far
Among the sons of men.

Here where they came,— those mighty dreams,—
And wrought their wondrous spells,
The song is hushed upon the hearth
And silence broods and dwells.

But still the sunshine lends caress
To shadows on the wall —
The ripples of the golden waves
Long watched by little Paul.

Sweet angel faces throng the air
In shadow or in sun,
To hear the prayer of Tiny Tim —
“God bless us, every one.”

But dusty book and idle pen
With silent voices tell
How he who loved all ranks of men
Has gone with little Nell.

Morn brightens on the English hills,
The windows glow and burn : —
An empty chair is waiting here
The master's slow return.

In vain, in vain ! he comes no more
The world's great heart to thrill,
The old, old fashion changes not —
The chair is empty still !

THE PASSING OF SUMMER.

Apples of harvest dropping down,
Leaves of the maples blotched with brown,
Rusty threads of the spider's line,
Blown about in the hazy shine,
Bloom of aster and thistle train,
Come with the royal Summer's wane.

Cat-tail flags in the marsh a-gleam —
Brown clubs all in an idle dream,
Tangle of bloom by the meadow run,
Ragweed ripe in the waning sun,
Milk-weed bursting its shards of floss,
Measure the Summer's wane and loss.

Down by the hem of Autumn's gold
Summer is straying richly stole,
All in the wondrous, golden glow,
Only her passing pageants know,
Airily waving o'er briar and clod
The royal plumes of her goldenrod.

A MORNING PRAYER.

The day is breaking and the shadows flee,
But ere I meet the busy world of care
With grateful heart I fondly turn to Thee —
Hear Thou my morning prayer.

Guide Thou my feet whatever way I take,
Lead me alike in shadow or in shine,
For me this day the living manna break,
And clothe with mail divine.

I will not fear although the way be long :
If Thou shalt guide I cannot go astray ;
Take Thou my hand — fill Thou my lips with song,
And lead me all the way.

Let all my weakness trust Thy gracious might,
And wait alway to hear Thy tender call,—
So shall Thy presence make the darkness light
When evening shadows fall.

AS A LITTLE CHILD.

What a charm is in the story
From the sacred Syrian land,
How one day they thronged the Master,
Crowding close on either hand ;
How the sick were healed and heartened,
What sweet peace came down to them
Who received His words of welcome,
Or but touched His garments' hem.

There they came, the sad and weary,
Dusty, footsore, halt and lame,
With the palsied borne on couches,
For afar had spread His fame ;
And the blind ones knew the gladness
Of the Summer's sheen and shine,
For the eyes long held in shadow
Felt the touch of the Divine.

Hither came the dark-eyed mothers
Full of tender, loving care,
For the Master's smile and blessing
Laid on childhood's sunny hair,
When one harshly, half in anger,
Chid the happy, childish throng —
Bade them cease their idle coming,
Hush the prattling, infant song.

Nay, but suffer them — the children —
Said the Man of Galilee,
And forbid them not when coming
In their innocence to Me;
For of such is heaven's kingdom : —
And He looked on them and smiled,
While the stern rebukers trembled
In the balance with a child.

Once again they queried blindly
Of the honors He would bring —
Which of them should be the greatest
In the kingdom of their King?

Then again the same sweet story
From the infant on His knee,
How the chiefest in His kingdom
As a little child must be.

A FALLEN STAR.

I wandered down a lonely way,
The night came down too soon,
For dimly in the west hung low
A pale and ghostly moon.

Grim shadows lay across my path,
And moaning like a child
Amid the sobbing branches crept
The night wind, weird and wild.

The rounded heaven was sown with stars —
A dome with worlds embossed ;
One, blazing, fled across the dark
And died, its glory lost !

What was it? Day of final doom
To some rebellious world ?
Or fallen spirit of upper light
To outer darkness hurled ?

IN SLUMBER-LAND.

Folded in a vision grand,
Led by angels hand in hand,
Baby roams the slumber-land.

Well we know the sunny gleams
Which enfold him in their beams,
By the laughter in his dreams.

Softly sleep's supreme disguise
Hides the wonder in his eyes,
Closed to every sweet surprise,

While the ruddy current flows,
Tint of lily, blush of rose,
Through the rapture of repose ;

Rosy health and beauty fair,
Rest that knows no weight of care,
Ruby lips and golden hair !

IN SLUMBER-LAND.

177

Sleep, and let the vision grand
Fold thee in the slumber land,
Led by angels hand in hand.

THROUGH FIELDS OF CORN.

In solemn hush of dewy morn,
What glory crowns the fields of corn !
A joy and gladness in the land
The lithe, green ranks of beauty stand ;
Broad-acred vales from hill to hill
The lifted plumes and tassels fill,
While birds sing in the cool sweet morn
Through fields of corn.

Like palms that shade a hidden spring
The reeded columns sway and sing ;
The breathing censers swing away,
The leafy cymbals clash and play ;
And when the breezy voices call,
The sea-green billows rise and fall,
And music swells and joy is born
Through fields of corn.

To fields of corn the Summer brings,
The rustling blades, the blackbird's wings,
The sharded locust's strident tune
And idle raven's mocking rune,
The bobolink's exulting strain,
And cuckoo prophesying rain
In low, sweet whistle in the morn
 Through fields of corn !

In bannered fields of corn unfurled
God grows the manna of the world ;
He waits to bring the yellow gleam,
The harvest song, the reaper's dream ;
And still as through the Syrian gold
Of Galilee, in days of old,
He leads again this Sabbath morn
 Through fields of corn !

SAINT GEORGE AND THE DRAGON.

You have heard of the wonderful Dragon
That the brave Saint fought of old —
The scaly beast with the fiery breath !
Ah ! it makes the blood run cold,

To think of the terrible conflict there,
When the glare of noonday shone,
On the blood-red crest of the Dragon's wrath,
And good Saint George all alone.

How bravely he fought from the early morn
Through a weary Summer's day,
While the blazing sun looked down from the sky
On the still uncertain fray !

Now up and now down for the good Saint George
The scale of the battle turned,
While his blows he rained on the Dragon's crest, —
And the red sun blazed and burned.

But fiercely he fought with a faith sublime,
Forgetful of thirst and pain,
Till he gained the well-earned victor's crown,
And the wild red beast was slain ! —

So the Dragon died and the realm had rest, —
And the Saint has passed away ;
But a fiercer dragon than Saint George slew
Is wasting our land to-day.

In the North and the South his trail is found,
On the East and West it lies :
He blights the land with his breath while he gloats
Over human sacrifice.

An army each year, with its thousands strong,
Grows pale at his touch, and dumb,
And reels to the grave he has dug so deep —
This terrible Dragon — Rum !

The wise and the good, the brave and the fair,
Are held alike in his thrall,
And a million homes in our land to-day
Have seen how the brightest fall.

The mother's hope and her life and her joy,
The staff of her waning years,
In the merciless grasp of the Dragon's fangs
Is held, in spite of her tears.

The harvests that wave over prairies and hills
For hunger's terrible needs,
But rot in the reeking pits of shame
Where the loathsome monster feeds.

O Heaven ! that a sight like this should be,
And the clouds still drop sweet rain,
And the sunshine weave its tangled gold
For a harvest time again !

O beautiful Land ! rouse up in thy might,
And arm thyself for the fray,
For the forces are gathering near and far,
And the Right must win the day !

O freemen ! list well to the bugle call,
Give heed to its ringing blast,
When the glittering hosts of battle form
Where the fatal die is cast !

When the cannon's peal and the battle pall
Roll up over hill and plain,
May the bolted wrath of the Heavens fall
On the Dragon forever slain !

LITTLE SAINT ELIZABETH.

Did the Springtime's waking thrill,
Throbbing over vale and hill,
Or the Summer's golden sheen,
Tint of bloom or robe of green,
Or the Autumn, russet, sere,
With the fruitage of the year,
Greet her coming unto earth
On the morning of her birth ?
None of these their beauty spread
For the aureole of her head ;
Not a robin song was trilled,
For with snow the nests were filled ;
Not a blossom matched its pearl
With the beauty of the girl,
Since she came with Winter's breath —
Little babe Elizabeth.

Summer followed Winter's gloom,
Wrought her mantle all of bloom,
Woke the voice of leaf and bird
With the happy wood-notes heard, —
Sang her sweet song loud and clear
In the infant maiden's ear : —
Well she listened to the song
While the Summer sped along,
Past the Winter's ermine old,
Folded over drifts of cold,
Till the second Summer's birds
Brought the magic gift of words !
Deep the wisdom that can reach
All the depths of baby speech ;
Very sweet the words she saith —
Little maid Elizabeth.

Summer lingered all in tune
'Mid the song and bloom of June ;
Sang the lay of bird and breeze,
Whispered through the maple trees,
Touched with beauty earth and space,
Wove for all things added grace ;

Kissed the baby maiden fair,
Fanned and tossed her silken hair ;
Kindled in her eyes of blue
Lights that looked the ages through :
Woke a longing for the land
Where the angel children stand, —
Land of beauty and of life,
With immortal lilies rife : —
Then exhaled the sweetest breath,
Little Saint Elizabeth !

IN CANA OF GALILEE.

I.

How sweet the story John has told
Of Cana's wedding wine of old :
And yet so brief, how can we know
The love that lit the long ago ?
What songs were sung, what words were said,
When manly strength and beauty wed ?
What dark eyes at the feast out-gleamed
Where laughing maidens mused and dreamed ?
Who clasped the lovers' jewelled hands
In wedded love's immortal bands ?
Or even who the twain might be,
In Cana, down in Galilee.

II.

So much the story leaves untold
About the marriage feast of old : —
Who hither thronged from hill and stream
To honor love's immortal dream ?

What gifts they brought — what treasure meet
To lay at Beauty's bridal feet?
How fair she seemed to loving eyes,
This maiden in her wedding guise?
What joy rang in the marriage bells?
Ah! none of this the record tells, —
But Jesus came a guest to be
In Cana, down in Galilee!

III.

O nameless groom! O nameless bride!
Whose feast the Master glorified!
By mountain slope, or hill or shore,
What home e'er held such guests before?
Here came they from the blue lake's rim
Who left their nets to follow him;
And here the blessed Mary smiled,
Meek Mother of the wondrous Child: —
Yet 'twas the Master's presence sweet
Made all the marriage feast complete,
That day He came a guest to be
In Cana, down in Galilee.

IV.

O city of immortal fame !
What glory lingers round thy name !
Thy walls have crumbled to decay,
But yet thou canst not pass away,
For hear we not along thy street
The foot-falls of the Master's feet ?
We know the need they brought to Him,
The water-pots filled to the brim,
His pledge of ministry Divine,
The blush that made the water wine, —
When Jesus came a guest to be
In Cana, down in Galilee.

V.

The lips are dust that redder grew
With wine the rich grape never knew,
But faith in His divinest sway
The story holds for us to-day ;
And down across the ages old
The lesson comes so sweetly told :

The best wine of the feast is poured
When Jesus rules the festal board : —
This truth let all the ages fill,
Though bride and groom are nameless still,
Whose wedding guest He came to be
In Cana, down in Galilee.

THE CITY OF DOOM.

*Before the night-song of the angels woke
The shepherd throng beneath the drooping palms,
And wide-eyed wonder faced the Syrian stars,
The Pleasure City wore her lustrous crown
And held her court where waves of azure lap
The gray sand-fringes of the tideless sea.*

*The mellow song above the Eastern hills
Rings on, and on, across the waking land,
And o'er a New World added to the Old,
In grander speech than olden ages knew ;
The one glad song that trembles round the world,
The Christmas hymn heard under all the stars :—
And Pleasure dreams beneath her ashen drifts
And hoards her gems while all the ages pass !*

THE CITY OF DOOM.

I.

In classic lands beneath the Roman sway,
Where Virgil sang the old, heroic lay,
In living numbers and melodious rhyme,
Enchanting ages with a song sublime, —
In that far land where azure skies are fair
And ruddy sunsets burn the crystal air,
Beside the sea whose waves, by tempest hurled,
Beat on the shores of all the Orient world,
On Syrian crags and drifted desert dunes,
Where Afric dreams in drowsy, tropic noons,
On Europe's coast, with crumbling ruins gray,
Chanting a dirge for splendor passed away —
Lulled by its song, Pompeii's glory seems
A pallid ghost, wrapped in her robe of dreams !

Where tideless billows sweep the azure bay
With flashing sheen of jewelled foam and spray,

And spread their treasures on the sea-washed sands,
The Silent City in her sorrow stands.
No whisper curves her cold and pallid lips,
No sunrise lifts her shadow of eclipse :
Alone and dumb amid her voiceless woe,
Nor heeds the centuries how they come and go : —
And still she dreams as in the ages past,
Beneath the shadow looming grim and vast
Above the ashes cast upon her crown,—
The scowl of doom — the dread volcano's frown.

How still she lies beneath the azure sky
While royal ages hurry swiftly by !
Suns rise and set and dynasties decay
While blue waves break beside her walls of gray,
And still her dream will never end nor flee —
An endless trance beside the Summer sea.

Immortal Dreamer of the classic clime,
Whose kings are dust beneath the sands of Time !
How lives thy fame ! How throng from every land
The pilgrim feet to press thy wave-worn strand !

From tropic plains where sweeps the slumbrous stream
That glides through Egypt's long-forgotten dream,
Past Karnack's halls and Luxor's pillared gate
Where bleary-eyed sphinxes sit in solemn state,
Nor whisper breathe from carven lips of stone
Of vanished grace and beauty overthrown,—
The soft air brings the breath of odorous balms
That swept the crowns of desert-dreaming palms,
And far waves bring from Afric's tropic shore
Her treasured gems to lay them at thy door.

Where Syrian splendors of the morning shine
Above the hills of sacred Palestine,
And flush again with hues of crimson fire
The sea-beat walls of desolated Tyre;
Where, azure-robed, the far Ægean smiles
Amid the beauty of her shadowy isles;
Where classic Hellas lifts her temple frieze
Above the sweep of blue, Ionian seas;
From Scio's crag and lonely sea-fringed wall
Whence came the song of fated Illium's fall,—
From isles afar they come with gentle sweep,
The azure waves that soothe the dreamer's sleep,

And break in foam upon the sea-washed sands,
Where in her grief the crownless Beauty stands !

Where clear and fair the Gates of Hercules
Are lifted high above the western seas,
And dizzy crags of sea-ward looking Spain
Are glassed forever in the purple main ;
Where waves that climb the rocky slopes, and fall,
Hold in their depths the vineyard slopes of Gaul ;
Or, farther still, within their crystal flow
The far white Alps in ghostly beauty glow,
Or snowy sweep of distant Apennines
In tideless azure of the ocean shines,
And Ischia's grace and couchant Capri lie,
Sphered in the crystal of the wave and sky ;
From misty shores where Arno's silver stream
Blends with the sea its placid Tuscan dream,
And yellow Tiber's muddy currents pour
Their murky tides along the Latian shore ;
From coasts that hold the Sundering seas between
The lifted crags that o'er the waters lean ;
From storied climes whose matchless splendors blaze
No more to greet the world's bewildered gaze ;

O' er seas remote — from glory's faded lands
The thronging waves roll in upon the sands : —
With foam and song upon their lips they come
Where stands the Crownless, desolate and dumb !

II.

From near and far, what trancing beauty waits
Beside her walls — before her fallen gates !
Beneath the sweep of matchless azure skies
What measureless, immortal visions rise !
What bannered dawns of crimson wide unrolled !
What burning splendors caught from sunset gold !
What azure reaches of the sea and air
In royal purple wait above her there !

Where far Campania veils her utmost rim
In misty azure phantom-like and dim,
By tideless blue of famed Salerno's bay
The mouldering temples of the gods decay, —
Their ancient altars marred by Ruin's rust
Are fallen low, and buried in the dust,
While Paestum's walls above her mouldering tomb
Are masked forever by her roses' bloom : —

In calm repose the purple Apennines
Lift high their cones above the fringe of pines,
Warm in the rapture of the Summer's glow,
Or gleaming white beneath the Winter's snow :
Broad meadow lands adorn the fruitful plain
With vineyards fair and waving fields of grain,
While laughing water leaping from the hills
The dreamy silence with its music fills.

Afar the slopes are fringed with lava rifts,
All desolate with gray of ashen drifts,
Where swelling hills forever mount and rise,
To lift in terror to the clouded skies
The awful form of desolation lone —
The dread volcano's kingly crown and cone !

A mount of flame above the buried years
That heeded not the unavailing tears ;
Shaken with thunders of the under-world,
And scathed with lightnings from its caverns hurled ;
In ruin clad of crusted lava tides
That crept through ages down its smoking sides, —

Furrowed and rifted with the fiery flow, —
A molten flood that stiffened long ago,
Untouched by shade of waving leaf, or bloom,
A mount of wrath — a Sinai of doom !

A pillared cloud of blackness and despair
That mars the crystal of the azure air, —
Like smoke ascending from a sacrifice
Its murky breath goes up the Summer skies,
All fringed with crimson from the crater's glow •
That boils with bubbling lava far below —
It trails a gloomy banner wide and free
Above the buried City by the sea.

Across the sweep of azure waves at play
Sorrento dreams beside the sea to-day :
On mountain slopes amid her groves of vine
Where purpling clusters blush to ruddy wine,
To craggy cliffs above the sea she clings, —
A mottled sea-bird with her out-spread wings, —
And all day long the groves of orange trees
Wave in the rapture of the Summer breeze.

The song of Tasso lingers, soft and low,
Though dead the bard three hundred years ago !
His shepherd guise, his clouded reason's span,
The dungeon bars and cruel hate of man, —
All these have passed, yet in the classic rhyme
His epic measures linger yet with Time —
His fame immortal while the azure wave
Breaks on the shells by lone Pompeii's grave !

Fair Naples, westward, by the wave-washed shore
Lifts up her crown of beauty evermore :
A southern Queen in all her jewelled pride
She sits in state beside the restless tide,
In royal grace and idle fancy free,
And bathes her white feet in the Summer sea, —
While down the sands, upon the beaten shells,
The fisher boy his gathered treasure tells,
Or idly dreams, his early labor done,
And leaves his brown nets bleaching in the sun.
Far on the breast of azure broad and deep
The phantom isles in misty beauty sleep,
Rocked by her breathing resolute and strong
And lulled by music of the wave's low song,

They rest in peace while hurrying ages fly,
And wear the beauty of the wave and sky : —
So held forever in the sea's embrace
They keep their matchless beauty and their grace.

From airy deeps the azure arches lean
In soft embrace above the trancing scene,
While far ascending through the crystal air
The crater's breath climbs up the endless stair,
Above the plain where Summer roses blow
And blush in tears above the city's woe,
And star-eyed Eve with soft and silver gleam,
Above the silence of her awful dream,
Looks down the world-sown vista of the spheres
And vigil keeps above her night of years.

So 'neath the meadows fringed with rambling vine
Where tawny herdsmen lead their drowsy kine,
Through woven tangle of the starry bloom
Whose breeze-swung censers spill a rare perfume,
Where waving shadows of the myrtle's spray
In airy raptures toss their plumes away,

Above the droning of the rivulet's rune —
A drowsy murmur through the heats of noon : —
So deep ! So deep ! beneath the wrathful gloom
That hangs above her gray, old lava tomb,
Her woven shroud, the dread volcanic storm
That closed in darkness round her breathing form : —
She lies so still ! in speechless sorrow lone,
'Neath ashen drifts that stifled every moan !

Slow sweep the circling ages in their flight,
She turns no more to greet the morning light ;
No charm they bear, the bannered dawn unrolled,
The high noon's splendor, or the sunset's gold ;
Her grace and beauty, marred by bitter tears,
Have been but dust two thousand vanished years !

III.

A dream of rest where died the stricken wail,
A peace profound where smote the lurid hail
Whose fierce, wild passion, with its fiery breath,
Was but the waving of the wing of death : —
No earthquake tread can mar her perfect sleep
While tireless ages still above her sweep.

Low in the dust of drifted ashes gray
Her storied temples and her gods decay,
Her crown of glory and her beauty flown,
Her palace walls by ruin overthrown !
The cinders pillow yet her crownless head, —
The royal bride all in her beauty wed, —
And covers still, with drifted fringe and fold,
Her bridal dower of jewels and of gold !

A solemn hush is on the busy throng,
A silence deep has stilled the voice of song ;
The eager feet that trod the streets of old
To mellowest music ever breathed or told,
Are still at last, beneath a spell sublime
Outlasting ages in the scale of Time,
While solemn dirges all the centuries fill,
And leave the crownless Beauty dreaming still !

O classic Land of Cæsar's great renown !
Of Art and Arms the glory and the crown,
The statesman's word, the poet's living lay,
Guard well thy trust — this dreamer of to-day !

Sleep on and rest, O endless dreamer, grown
Grandly immortal through the ages flown !
The Kings are dust beneath whose royal sway
Thy dream began in ages far away ! —
Imperial Rome has held her treasure long,
Her classic story and her deathless song ;
Her mud-built walls to parapets of stone,
Her shepherd huts to palaces have grown,
And these have crumbled into ruins gray
Where mantling ivy weeps above decay : —
• Time rolls his round — the solemn ages flee,
And still Pompeii dreams beside the sea !

IV.

Turn back, O Time ! thy hoary centuries told
Since first the sunrise touched her gates with gold !
How fair the glory of her dawn appears
Beyond the sweep of all the tidal years, —
Star-watched and crowned through all the ages long,
And lulled to rest by Pleasure's measured song !

So queenly grand beside the storied sea,
The heir of all the ages yet to be ;

•

How stately fair beneath her jewelled crown,
Clad in her robe of Beauty's fair renown,
She lifted high to meet the passing gaze,
Her walls white sheen amid the waving sprays
Of myrtle boughs, that shook in shadowy grace
Beneath the rapture of the sun's embrace !

Afar she watched through misty, azure light,
The changeful glow of storm-spread wings of white, —
The far blown sails in beauty drifting by
Against the azure of the wave and sky, —
While white-winged Commerce, wafted by the breeze,
Brought odorous spices from the Indian seas.
Fair silken webs from looms of far Cathay,
And Tyrian purple's royalest array,
Rare beaten gold from dusky Indostan,
And dreamy fabrics wrought in Ispahan —
The rarest gems of Orient's treasured store
In wealth untold, and laid them at her door !

What Art could fashion with its touch divine,
What snowy marble bend to beauty's line,

What music breathe with its entrancing spell,
What airy Graces time its measures well,
What breathing passion waken from the dead,
Where blinded Eros' feathered arrows sped, —
These wrought for her their witchery untold,
The rarest pleasures of the ages old.

Through all her courts swept Pleasure's idle throng
Ere Virgil's epic blossomed into song :
Long ere the savage Briton learned to yield
Before the Roman's brazen battle shield,
Ere bannered legions swept the plains of Gaul,
Or Cæsar's palace reared its marble wall,
To crown the crest of that imperial hill
Whose crumbling ruins mock the ages still —
Pompeii saw the flush of morning fall
On temple roof and myrtle shadowed wall !

How kingdoms rose and glittered for a day,
What nations fell and crumbled to decay,
How swift and far the Imperial Eagles bore
Their world-wide conquest to the farthest shore,

How o'er the sea that laves the tropic strand,
The palm-fringed border of the Afric land,
Fair Carthage wakened from her calm repose
By stormy legions of her hated foes,
In splendid wrath of battle rained her spears
On Roman valor born of battle years,
Till fair Thrasymene blushed with crimson foam
And alien armies shook the gates of Rome, —
These visions passed before her sheltered gaze,
In shadowed ease beneath her myrtle sprays !

How paled at last the fame of Cannae's field,
How southern valor perished on his shield
Amid the storm that shook the clouded land,
And buried Carthage 'neath the desert's sand ;
How Roman legions rang Judea's knell
And Zion's sacred City reeled and fell,
Tower and temple smote with flaming brands,
Her altars wasted by unholy hands,
Her children captive and her sacred gold,
Divinely wrought, in heathen markets sold ;
How fair Athene — Hellas' great renown —
The ages' blended glory and their crown,

The home of Art, of golden speech and song,
Of deathless valor and the hate of wrong —
Smote by the swarming legions from afar,
The flame-led Eagles of the Western Star,
Went down in sorrow from her templed hill
Whose ancient glory lingers faintly still : —
All this she saw, as in her beauty's prime
The shadows swept across the hills of Time !

V.

O'er far Judea's lifted mountain throng
The angel chorus woke in midnight song ;
The starry spaces heard the wondrous strain,
And watchful shepherds caught the glad refrain,
So sweetly echoed from the hill and glen, —
The blessed Peace — the sweet good-will to men !
Far Kings and Sages from the empires old
Came with their gifts of frankincense and gold,
And laid them down amid the flush of morn
Before the manger where the Christ was born.

Years went and came, as cloud-swung shadows flee
Across the dream of sleeping Galilee ;

And lo ! in blessing through Judea's land
The Prince of Peace walked with his chosen band : —
What cooling touch for fevered brows of pain !
What words of joy before the gates of Nain !
What blessed healing for the ills of them
Who might but touch His seamless garment's hem !
How glad of heart the weary mothers brought
Their babes to Him, for loving blessing wrought
By hands divine on childhood's sunny hair,
That left for aye a brighter glory there !
So journeyed on the mercy sandalled feet
By mountain slope, or through the crowded street,
By Sychar's well, or lonely palm-fringed hill : —
While fair Pompeii, clad in beauty still,
And treasured jewels rich in Orient gleam
Of prisoned wonder, kept her idle dream.

And through the changeful glory of the years,
The joy of Cana, and the blinding tears
O'er Bethany's grave upon the mountain side,
Where sorrowing Mary's sinless brother died,
The Summer glory of the lily's bloom,
The mountain's splendor and the guarded tomb,

The earthquake shudder and the starless night
That hung in terror round the trembling height,
Where Heaven's eternal purpose wrought and won —
Gave earth's broad kingdom to His Sovereign Son,—
The sea-walled City held her courtly throng,
Her dream of splendor and her idle song :
A heathen vestal pouring sacred wine
To gods and heroes at a pagan shrine,
Nor in her blindness knew the truth foretold
By seers and sages in the days of old,
Nor how divinely, while the years had flown,
The Son of God had walked the earth unknown !

Through ages long she held her lifted crown
While stars of empire faded and went down ;
In undimmed splendor by the purple sea
She grasped the scepter of the years to be,
And idly watched the passing seasons fly
In varying splendor over earth and sky,
Nor dreamed that one with fairy web of bloom
Would mask her beauty for the final doom.

VI.

On swept the years, whose flight forever mars
The dreams that face the glory of the stars :
And lo ! to Beauty's waiting gaze unrolled,
The royal Summer spread her green and gold !
From purple sea to swelling mountain cone
The starry splendor of her presence shone ;
The broad Campania drank the fragrant showers
And tossed in sunshine all its foam of flowers ;
The upland slopes were glad with clustered vine
That held the dream of Autumn's luscious wine,
And far and wide the grace of Summer lay
On blush of rose and airy myrtle's spray ;
Sweet buds and blossoms wove in tangled frills,
Fringed with their beauty all the tented hills,
While witching lights that magic Summer weaves
Fell from the shuttles of her shining leaves,
And clouds of incense floated in the air —
Sweet Nature's breath amid the hush of prayer, —
And lo ! Pompeii, clad in Summer's guise,
Stood on the verge of awful sacrifice !

The morning came, whose tides of splendor rolled,
Would touch no more her gleaming gates with gold ;
The starless wings of midnight, black and lone,
Spread far and wide above Vesuvius' cone ;
The dawn's deep splendor and the blaze of noon
Hung dark and rayless in a lifeless swoon ;
Wan lightnings lit the mountain's funeral pyre,
And seething lava fell in curves of fire :
The reeling earthquake's shudder of despair
Awoke the thunders of the startled air ;
On shrines of home, and palace roof as well,
The blazing meteors of the mountain fell ;
O'er temple dome, and Forum's rifted wall,
The flaming horror spread and kindled all ! —
The wrathful reign of blazing vengeance o'er,
The starless night held sway at noon once more,
While hissing cinders' swiftly falling sleet
Walled up her gates and filled her silent street,
And storms of ashes drifting through the gloom
Reared high the walls that made a living tomb : —
And still the might of endless wrath unspent
Beat land and sea and starless firmament !

Again the glories of the rising morn
Looked on the land of dreary chaos born :
From purple sea to rifted mountain cone,
O'er blighted wastes the golden morning shone ;
And far and wide an ashen wing had spread
A dreary pall above the dreamless dead !
Lo ! where Pompeii took the ruddy glow
Of morning's splendor on her roofs of snow,
High o'er her fanes and lofty pillared halls
The drifted cinders reared their sculptured walls,
And vengeful wrath, above her beauty hurled,
Had veiled her grace and glory from the world !

VII.

O voiceless Time ! how have thy centuries rolled
Above the treasures of her buried gold !
Two thousand years thy cloudy wings have spread
Above the pillow of her crownless head !—
Since o'er her fell eternal night's eclipse
And hushed the song that trembled on her lips,
On Patmos isle the visioned Seer has known
The burning splendors of the Sovereign Throne,

And pagan shrines that held the world in sway
Have fallen down and crumbled to decay.
Beneath the spell the mighty years have wrought,
What angel wings have stirred the wells of thought !
What vaster kingdoms woke to birth sublime,
Immortal heirs of all the years of Time !

The ages pass, and on Pompeii's walls
The matchless splendor of the Summer falls ;
On roofless temples and on fallen shrines
The changeless sun in mid-day glory shines ;
On arch and pillar falls the golden glow
That wreathed with ivy once the marbles' snow ;
On carven lilies crowning columns prone,
And faded beauty desolate and lone,
On rifted walls and brazen gates unsealed,
Where through her glory stands again revealed !

A brooding silence fills each winding street
With lava paved and worn by vanished feet ;
And stillness reigns where once the merry throng
In mellow music woke the measured song

Whose dying echoes 'neath the starlight rang
A thousand years before our Chaucer sang !
The roofless walls rise up on either hand,
A blackened horror, frowning where they stand ;
While through the rents that wasting Time has made
The rifts of sunlight fret the noon-day shade.

In silent halls, through wide, unguarded doors,
The shadows fall on princely marble floors,
On rich mosaics wrought with patient care
And tinted walls which Art has rendered fair : —
In pictured courts the fallen statues lie
Beneath the azure of the Summer sky ;
The broken fountain's long-forgotten song
Is with the laughter of the vanished throng,
And sleep's cool chambers, where the shadows stay,
Tell of the dreamers who have passed away !

From shrines of Pleasure opened to the sun
The guests are gone — the dreamy revel done ! —
While yet the wine that caught its ruddy glow
From Autumn suns in ages long ago,

On vineyard slopes or vine entangled plains,
Untouched, untasted, bubbles and remains !
The ivied Forum hears no more the tread
Of thronging feet — a score of ages dead ;
The marts of trade are echoless and lone,
The pillared temples rent and overthrown ;
The wild arena, crimsoned deep with gore,
Has hushed her stormy plaudits evermore.
In olden homes, where through the ages long
Glad mothers crooned the loving cradle song,
Where happy Childhood blent its laughter sweet
With patter soft of silken sandalled feet,
Eternal Silence sits amid her peers —
A speechless throng — two thousand vanished years !

Majestic Silence ! 'neath thy scepter's sway
What viewless shades have jostled us to-day !
Since thou hast reigned above the City's doom
The bud of Time has flowered in perfect bloom ;
Lo ! from these walls we look with lifted eyes
Through endless vistas down the western skies,
Where Albion stands with all her race of Kings —
Where fair Columbia's grander glory springs : —

To these shall come the tribes of every clime,
In these shall blend the royal worth of Time, —
All speech and language melt, all song be sung,
In Shakespeare's words — in Milton's English tongue !

The Sunset lingers ! — far Campania smiles ;
And seaward sleep the purple, phantom isles :
The orange splendor leaves a tender glow
On waveless sea and distant cones of snow,
And grandly, while its dying glories flee,
Pompeii stands transfigured by the sea : —
Swift from her throne by ruthless Ruin hurled,
She lives to-day immortal as the world !

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